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THE

WESTERN COAST OF AFRICA.

JOURNAL OF AN OFFICER

UNDER

CAPTAIN OWEN.

RECORDS OF A VOYAGE

IN THE SHIP DRYAD, IN 1830, 1831, AND 1832.

BY PETER LEONARD,

Surgeon of the British Navy.

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CHAPTER I.

Reflections on the peculiar hazards and hardships of service in Africa. Commencement of the survey of the western coast. Island of Dassen. St. Helena bay. Cape Negro. Benguela and its natives. An unpleasant affair. The Barracouta rejoined by the Leven at Angola.

His Majesty's ships Leven, Capt. Owen, and Barracouta, Capt. Vidal, left England for the purpose of surveying the whole of the East and West Coasts of Africa in February 1822. The dreadful mortality which attended this expedition was almost unprecedented; a service at all times accompanied with danger, was here rendered tenfold hazardous, by an unseen—but too certain foe. A British seaman fears no enemy that his eye can see; he dreads not the cannon's or the tempest's roar; when poised in air upon the giddy mast, his fearless heart beats no quicker than when rocked in his hammock; but the pestilential breath of Africa is a source of silent terror to his courageous nature; he feels himself in the daily presence of an opponent with whom he cannot struggle; this constant reflection unmans and unnerves him, when he either sinks to low despondency or tries to drown thought by intoxicating reason—the one no less fatal in its termination than the other. Yet does he utter no complaint; you perceive no hesitation when ordered on his fatal duty; he

obeys the command, and he dies without a murmur—he sees his friends and comrades fall around him, yet he shrinks not—the subtle enemy asks for more, and seizes the generous hero who has just wiped the tear from this manly cheek for those beings consigned to their watery grave. None who have not seen the effects of this pestilential climate can conceive its horrors; to-day surrounded by lively and agreeable companions, whose buoyant mirth, heedless of the future, thinks but of the passing hour—with the morrow come the aching head, sunken eyes, and pallid cheek, too certain preludes of the active poison's course; the mind feeds the burning fever, despondency acts like oil on the flame, and in a few hours the thoughtless heart ceases its slight struggles. During the seven years which I passed upon this desolating coast, I have seen about forty brother officers, and two hundred brave seamen, fall victims to the noxious climate; and strange to say, death became so frequent an occurrence, that the heart became callous to grief, and the eye saw old friends and comrades consigned to their ocean tomb without a sigh, while the imagination turned from contemplating this ceremony to speculate upon the next most likely sacrifice. Now that Heaven has spared me to reflect upon the fatal scenes which are passed, I think with gratitude upon my miraculous escape, and mourn over the memory of those who so nobly sacrificed themselves for the benefit of their country and mankind. But as many even now may be weeeping for some dear friend or relative, who there found an early grave, one slight incident shall serve to illustrate many of a similar nature.

At Woolwich, a youth was entered as a volunteer; his only parent was a mother; he was her only child; she came on board to bid him farewell, when she bespoke the kindness of each officer to consider the tender years, and his never having been from under her care. She hung upon his neck as the ship got under weigh, and with difficulty was taken from him into the boat alongside. The boy watched his mother to the shore, and tried to hide the tear upon his cheek,

as he turned to his new companions when she landed. He was a fine lively lad, and before we got to Africa forgot his fear, but frequently spoke of his mother. We had been on the coast about two years. He had been sent up a river surveying in the boats. They returned in about a week. As they came alongside, we observed many oars lying useless; those who had worked them were dead; while some of the rowers, although in appearance strong and lusty fellows, were pulling the feeble stroke of enervation and disease. An occasional Mid's cap and cloak told a tale of early merit meeting with an early grave.—Poor J—— lay at the bottom of a boat: as with difficulty he mounted the ship's side, he tried to force a smile to meet his comrades. He soon complained of a head-ache, his face was pale, and he spoke but little. In twenty-four hours after his return, she who had cherished, might have seen him die, and heard his parched lips utter her name with his dying breath! As his slight frame was consigned to the deep, and the last volley pealed over the closing wave, I could not forget the tear on his fair cheek at Woolwich, when he saw for the last time—her, whose every hope and thought he was. Can the imagination conceive the withering feelings of the mother's heart, when told that she was childless? But I will close these remarks, as I would not open afresh wounds that time may have closed, or add one tear to the eye of sorrow.

Having completed a survey of the East, we arrived at the Cape of Good Hope in November 1825, from which place a survey of the West Coast was to commence. It would be superfluous to give any description of the sublimely beautiful scenery which surrounds the anchorage of this southernmost point of Africa. Every Oriental journal teems with the beauties of the Cape, and the wisdom of Nature in making Table Bay; the very name is cheering to the stomach of an Englishman, whose appetite is not yet refined or destroyed by a residence in the land of *pillaws* and *curries*. After having remained here for some days, making necessary preparations,

we put to sea, being joined by the Albatross tender. A few hours after leaving TableBay, we arrived at a small island called Robbin, which lies about six miles from Cape Town, bearing N. E. by N. Here are situated a prison for convicts, and a small barrack for the military guard, who are relieved monthly. These convicts are Caffres, who have been detected in the act of stealing from the colonial residents. Any class of vessel will find a good shelter from a N. W. wind under this island, when, on the contrary, they would be quite exposed in Table Bay. We anchored for the night, and commenced our first survey of the coast, on the following day, but in consequence of unfavourable winds, made but little progress.

We next visited the island of Dassen. This is another small, low island, situated about three miles from the main, only inhabited by a few men, whose sole occupation is finding the eggs of the penguin-gull, and numerous other seafowl, with which this little spot abounds. It appears literally a living mass of flying matter, in spite of its anti-prolific inhabitants. These birds deposit their eggs in the burning sand; when the plunderers commence digging, they muster in large numbers and try to defend their various progeny. Their attack is most desperate, and the spoilers are obliged to beat off the enemy with one hand, while they secure the prize with the other. They are employed by a Mr. Trutor, of Cape Town, who supplies that market, where they meet with a ready sale: above 20,000, which they had recently taken, were at that moment waiting to be shipped and as they keep even in that climate for six months, the profit must be considerable.

We next rounded Cape St. Martin, and anchored in St. Helena Bay, which is a very good harbour in the S. E. monsoon—its only recommendation, as nothing can be procured in the shape of provisions. The ruins of two or three houses are the only indications of humanity having once dwelt in this land of desolation; not one speck of verdure relieves

the eye in its trackless wanderings over the desert. The whole line of the coast from Table Bay to this sandy spot presents the same barren waste. Having surveyed the whole of this bay, we were compelled to anchor, as a heavy swell was drifting us in shore: observing the Leven in the offing, we fired a gun to acquaint them with our situation, which she answered, and stood from the shore. The land breeze carried us out of the bay on the following morning, and we continued our survey of the coast; we passed the mouth of the Orange River, which had a very heavy surf on the bar, and along shore. Although an immense space of water was seen over the foaming bank, yet we could not perceive any entrance for a boat. Having passed this river, the coast changed its hitherto monotonous and barren aspect, and we were relieved by a chain of small islands and rocks extending in shore, and bearing the most fantastic shapes.—One particularly struck my attention. It was a rock which appeared originally to have been of some height and extent, but the sea or some other cause had carried away the whole of its centre, excepting a surface of about twenty feet deep, which rested on the two extremities, leaving between them an immense archway or natural bridge, apparently capable of allowing a ship to sail under without lowering a mast. We were not, however, tempted to make the experiment, therefore continued our course along shore until we came to anchor in Angra Peguina Bay, which place we surveyed in the boats. The surrounding country is one continued sand, without a shrub as far as the eye can see. The interior bears the same aspect; consequently, we met with no molestation from any natives, although we were given to understand many existed farther in the interior of this coast, who have a great antipathy to Europeans. A rock forms the north end of this bay, upon the top of which we found a column and cross, which, in the adventurous and flourishing days of the Portuguese, was erected here by Bartholomew Diaz, about the beginning of the fifteenth century. This pillar is composed of solid marble, but much

dilapidated by the boisterous winds and waves to which it is constantly exposed. It has the arms of Portugal (five Moors' heads) at its summit, and had an inscription which time has now rendered quite illegible. To support our national character even in that distant land, various specimens of Bartholomew Diaz's pillar were knocked off and brought on board, either for the satisfaction of the dilapidator, or gratification of the curious. The world would be greatly benefitted, if any scientific phrenologist could discover what particular organ in an Englishman's cranium produces in him that longing after immortality, which he gratifies by either picking a finger or nose off every statue he can get near, or writing his name on every bench, tree, or post that comes in his way: *destructiveness* appears the most probable.—But, to continue.

We frequently were at a loss for objects to assist our survey, in consequence of the great monotony along the coast, until we came within sight of Cape Negro, which, as we approached from the southward, had the appearance of an island. On the top of this cape is another cross erected by Bartholomew Diaz; and a few miles south of this a cluster of high trees, well worthy of notice, as being the first seen from about 100 miles south of Orange River, a distance of nearly 1000 miles; we also observed some bullocks, but no huts or natives. Cape Negro is situated in lat. 15° 45′ S. long. 11° 53′ E. When we had rounded the Cape, the coast became rather more pleasing, the valleys picturesque and fertile. We next came to Rio Vittoria, which is nothing more than a small creek going a considerable distance into the interior, the banks being extremely beautiful and covered richly with verdure. We observed near this place a large herd of cattle, and, shortly afterwards, a village containing about thirty huts of the rudest construction, built of mud, the largest not more than eight feet high, with a little oval-shaped entrance about three. On the beach were several boats of a rectangular form, and apparently not more

civilised in their manufacture than the habitations; several of the natives were observed staring at us, who appeared in a most perfectly natural costume. Continuing along shore we perceived many canoes fishing, and another village of much greater extent and neater construction than the last. One in particular was large, well built, and white-washed, from which, and elephants being very numerous on this part of the coast, I conjecture they have some communication with the Portuguese.

Our next anchorage was the Bay of Benguela, (after a run of seventy miles,) at which place we were to await the Leven's arrival. Benguela is situated on a plain fronting the sea, containing about fifty houses neatly built in the old Portuguese style; they are tiled and white-washed, but chiefly composed of mud. A fort is situated on the left of the town, mounting twenty-eight pieces of small calibre, but in a most dilapidated state, and promising, in case of use, much more injury to their immediate friends than more distant enemies. Two churches are *intended to adorn* the town; but one being in ruins, and the other having undergone no repair since the year 1718, the effect falls short of the intention. The costume worn by the natives is a scanty piece of blue cloth thrown loosely round them, adorned with beads and various trinkets of European manufacture. Others are entirely folded in lion and leopard skins, which gives them rather a dignified appearance.

The slave trade, is here carried on to a great extent; on our arrival we found seven vessels lying in the bay, with the undisguised purpose of receiving a cargo of human flesh—in fact, three of them were swarming with these wretched victims of their fellow-creatures' cupidity. Every evening after their scanty repast, they were allowed to walk for a short time upon deck, when they appeared so close, that with difficulty they were enabled to move; below, the sufferings of these poor creatures must have been great, judging by their numbers, and compass in which they were confined. The

profit arising from this inhuman traffic is a strong inducement for its continuance. The inhabitant Portuguese first buy them from the native chiefs for about five dollars each, or commodities of that value in the opinion of the savage, but which in England would be purchased for as many half-pence. The Portuguese then sell them to the different vessels, for about eight times the sum given to the native. As no slaves are exported without the governor's sanction, I imagine some duty to be paid him upon them. This is, in a great measure, confirmed by his encouraging the trade by every possible means, and his precautions that no *illicit* traffic may be carried on, to prevent which a night guard-boat is constantly on the look-out. If we consider the government under which he works, it is not unreasonable to conclude that his whole salary arises from this disgraceful source.

A new governor had just arrived, the former having gone to Angola, a place of greater opulence: we found him a very agreeable man, with apparently a great knowledge of the world. He was a captain in the Portuguese navy, and spoke our language with great fluency, having been for some time in England. Elephants, lions, tigers, and various other wild beasts, are abundant here, in company with crocodiles, alligators, and numerous serpents and reptiles. The elephants, some few months since, had been rendered so furious by extreme thirst, that they absolutely entered the town in a body for the purpose of helping themselves. The inhabitants soon mustered to defend their wells and houses, and succeeded in destroying seven of them with the loss of one man killed, and about ten wounded. The produce of this place was then little or nothing: in consequence of their having had no rains at the usual season for the last two years, they were entirely dependent upon Angola for the necessary supplies, instead of, as hitherto, furnishing that place with all kinds of provision. We were here given to understand, that near the Rio Vittoria before mentioned, which is about seventy miles off, a sulphur mine has been discovered, then worked but little, and that only by the natives; the reason given by the gover-

nor for its being thus neglected was, that as it is a government concern, no individual likes to undertake it; for, like the dog in the manger, although they cannot derive any benefit from it themselves, yet they will not allow any one else to do so. He also spoke of a gold mine about one hundred miles in the interior of the country, called Matamba, but said they were prohibited by their government from working it. This did not meet with much credence, as the value of that commodity is too well known in Portugal to admit of their neglecting such an opportunity for its acquirement, and it is generally asserted here, that no European can enter this country without being put to death. An attempt was made not long since to work an iron mine in the same neighbourhood, and a party sent from the Brazils for that purpose, who all in a short time fell victims to either the climate or the ferocious natives. These are supposed to work the gold mine themselves in a trifling degree, as, when much pressed by want, they occasionally send a piece of the ore in for barter; the value they place upon it takes away the impression of its being very abundant. At the west end of this bay is a very remarkable hill, called by the Portuguese "Sombreiro," or Bonnet—and by the English, St. Philip's Bonnet; from this place is carried on a communication by land with Mozambique, a distance of 2000 miles across the continent. By way of consolation, we were here given to understand, that the sickly season had just commenced; and as we had to make a particular survey of the coast to Benin, we had the agreeable prospect of its company on our route. We employed a party of natives to procure wood and water, the latter looking as if drawn from a spring of pea-soup, but to a tropical thirst, and short allowance, like Mahomed's water of Zulal.—We also procured five dwarf bullocks, weighing on an average not more than 180 lbs. each. I could not help thinking how these poor animals would blush by the side of their brother bullocks, who exhibit annually their corpulent carcases in England. Nature is here their only feeder, and a bad hand she makes of it.

Finding the Leven did not arrive, and having heard that a vessel had been seen a short distance to the southward, we concluded it must be she drifted past by the currents, which are very prevalent upon this coast.—Capt. Owen's orders were very decisive, that Capt. Vidal should remain ten days for his arrival, yet we felt fully confident he had passed and gone to Angola, the next settlement of the Portuguese.—We were the more confirmed in this, as when we last parted from the Leven, she had twelve hours sail a-head of us, in order to survey that part of the coast by day, which we passed during the night. Under these circumstances we got out of the bay, and continued our course towards Angola. The land along the coast presented a most diversified prospect of fertile hills and valleys, although to all appearance but thinly populated. Between Benguela and Angola, a distance of 230 miles, are several remarkable head lands, forming spacious and commodious bays, and affording good anchorage.

On the morning of the third day from our leaving Benguela, we came upon a low neck of land about three-quarters of a mile in width, thickly wooded with cocoa-nut trees, and having apparently a large population. The situation of this land is very peculiar, extending nearly sixteen miles, without any elevation to intercept the view of the bay and country near Angola, which could be distinctly seen over it from the ship's deck. Although this land is so low, yet the boldness of the coast enabled us to run quite close in shore, much to the gratification of the numerous spectators. We then came to an opening, through which could be seen the bay; on the left was an island with a large building upon it, and a ship, which we afterwards heard was bilged, and had been lying there for the last eighteen months. Angola was distinctly seen across the bay, apparently a large town, built on the face of a hill. As ships cannot enter by this opening, we continued our course along the island which is named St. Paul de Loando, and which forms the north side of the bay.—

It is about four miles long, and very low. We rounded the end of this island, and commenced working up to the anchorage. As we stood in-shore, a pilot came off, and at the same time a gun was fired from the fort which commands the entrance to the harbour, without showing any colours.—This fort is formed by a cliff on the southern side, with a very strong battlement above, mounting in all about forty guns of large calibre. Immediately after firing the first gun, Capt. Vidal desired to know of the pilot, whether it was the custom of the port to anchor, or communicate in any way previously to entering? Upon his answer in the negative, we continued our course, which was no sooner perceived by the fort than a shot was fired directly at us, they hoisting at the same time Portuguese colours. The shot fell within two feet of our fore-chains, splashing the water into us most plentifully. As this last proceeding did not correspond with our ideas of etiquette, we hove-to, and sent a boat under the battery to assure them, that if they sent another such message, we certainly should knock the fort about their ears, before we went any farther. Lieut. Boteler, the officer commanding the boat, was informed upon his landing by the commandant of the fort, that it was customary for all foreign ships, on entering this harbour, to send a boat to the battery previously. He laid all the blame upon the pilot for not acquainting us with the rules of the port, and said he should report this neglect on his part to the governor. With respect to firing at the vessel, he acknowledged having ordered a shot to be fired, finding we neglected the first gun, but desired that it should not be pointed at us. He declared, also, by way of apology, that he did not see our colours, although they were flying all the time; and concluded by requesting we would not proceed up the harbour until they had orders from the governor. We, however, anticipated him by immediately sending a letter, in forming him of their proceedings, and to require an explanation of this insult offered to the British flag. The governor instantly despatched an answer, expressing his regret at what had hap-

pened, assuring us the conduct of the fort should be strictly inquired into that the port was open to all English ships, and that the tried friendship of the two nations fully entitled us to every assistance in their power to give. As we afterwards heard the commandant of the fort was an officer of experience and a gentleman, we were inclined to consider the gun's being pointed at the ship, as the malicious act of the man who fired it; and doubtless the fellow regretted his shot did not prove so efficacious as he anticipated. Having received this *amende honorable* from the governor, we at once stood up the harbour, and anchored about a mile and a half from the town. We had no sooner done so, than we observed a ship bearing-up under all sail, which we soon recognized as the Leven. In half an hour she cast anchor along-side us. They had arrived at Benguela the morning after our departure, which being informed of, they merely stopped a few hours, and then made the best of their way to join us in this harbour.

CHAPTER II.

Harbour and town of Angola. Disgraceful extent of the slave-traffic there. Town of Ambriz; another mart for slaves. Villages along the coast. Cape Padron. Strange custom of piracy against the slave-ships. Superstitious habits of the wild inhabitants of the coast. A pathetic monkey. Operations of the survey Cape Palmeiro.—Hostile demonstrations of the natives towards Lieut. Botelor and his boat's crew. Measures of severity in self-defence.

The harbour of Angola is very extensive, with a great depth of water. I should, however, recommend all European vessels not to anchor within one mile and a half of the town; for, as the nights are in general calm and oppressively hot, the sea-breeze becomes of the utmost importance, and by lying close under the island, it may be enjoyed with some degree of regularity. Numerous fortifications command the bay at every point. The strongest and principal garrison is situated on the brow of a hill on one side of the town, mounting nearly eighty guns. In addition to this are three others; one built on a rock communicating with the main land by a draw-bridge, having also a very strong battery of sixty-four guns, commanding the harbour in every direction. The town of Angola is the most extensive settlement which the Portuguese possess on this coast. When approached from the southward, it presents rather a grand and pleasing appearance, being situated on an eminence, surmounted by the garrison before mentioned. The houses are of stone, spacious and substantial, as Portuguese dwellings on this coast generally are; regularly and even tastefully built, with several

churches and a cathedral. The market is tolerably supplied during the season, but filthy in the extreme. It is singular they do not take a greater pride in this one particular; for, I believe, from the principal market-place of Lisbon, to that of their smallest settlement, they are noted for the dirty state of their towns, and the various offensive effluvia which they constantly inhale. Numerous military are stationed here; the privates composed chiefly of convicts from Portugal; many of the officers are also sent to this country for trifling offences committed at home. Two instances came to my knowledge; the one was *merely* for murdering a padre; the other for putting a sister, who was a bit of a shrew, upon the fire, which was the natural cause of her becoming a cinder. For these *trifling* offences, being men of some interest, they suffered the penalty of transportation, and here appeared to njoy themselves despite of padres and sisters! Many of emare, however, most gentlemanly men and good officers, ving served, in several instances, with our army when on Peninsula. We invariably experienced the greatest po- ness and attention from them whenever we were on re.

very description of provisions was at this time selling for most exorbitant prices; even water is very scarce, on unt of their having no springs or rivers in the neighbour- . In order to obviate this inconvenience, a number of e boats are constantly employed in fetching it from Bengo r, which is about nine miles to the northward, and upon n the town and ships depend entirely for their supply. were informed that every description of tropical fruit abundant here during the summer months; and the or- s are said to be finer at this place than any other along coast. We had not, unfortunately, an opportunity of ing, in consequence of the rainy season having set in. only thing we found at all plentiful was herrings, h our people caught so fast, that we were compelled to w them overboard by boats full. The zoological prod-

uctions in the immediate vicinity are lions, tigers, hyenas, wolves, zebras, and elephants, of a prodigious size. The soldiers have also some pretty horses of a Spanish breed. A great variety of serpents, scorpions, and numerous venomous insects, bring up the rear, to give their gentle torments, if you be fortunate enough to escape the more ferocious violence of the larger inhabitants. The unblushing effrontery with which the slave-trade is here carried on surprises the unsophisticated eye of a European. The civilized inhabitant of an enlightened country naturally wonders how the sovereign of a Christian state can thus openly violate every tie of humanity and affection! The throne's lustre is tarnished by the tears of misery, and the king who countenances so inhuman a traffic will tremble when called to receive that mercy which he showed to others. His hands will be too deeply stained by the blood of his victims, to hope that years of penitence and tears can ever wash it out! Is it not a stigma on the Powers which rule Europe, that they permit those who are compelled to obey, thus to obtain riches by breaking every law of religion and nature? Twenty-four ships were at this time lying in the harbour of Angola, waiting for cargoes of human misery. One brig, of not more than 180 tons, had on board above four hundred slaves, with which she went to sea! thus closely packed, to be tossed about probably for weeks, before they tasted the comparative, but sterile happiness of domestic slavery!

Having remained here for about a week, and completed a survey of the bay, we worked out and proceeded to the northward. As we met with many contrary currents outside, and the wind was very light, we made but little progress for some days; this gave us an opportunity of observing the coast, which presented a particularly beautiful appearance, being thickly wooded, and varied with numerous hills, valleys, and rivers We were led to suppose this line of country was plentifully inhabited, as every night we could perceive fires extending over a great distance.

About four days after leaving Angola, we arrived off a small place called Ambriz, where we found five vessels at anchor under Brazilian colours. This town is situated on a hill, which forms the south point of the bay, from which it takes its name: a reef extends some distance out from the land, affording good shelter for boats. This place is also supported by the slave-trade; and as there are no Portuguese inhabitants, the traders obtain them at a lower price than at other towns along the coast.

In the bay, a little above the town, is the mouth of a small river, which runs through a very extensive and fertile valley, presenting a most beautiful piece of scenery, the distant hills forming a rich and abrupt back-ground. Having passed the town of Ambriz, we came upon a very remarkable range of hills, covered with immense blocks of granite, looking, at a distance, like a number of large stone buildings, one performing the part of a church with much propriety, being formed by a large mass towering over all, in the shape of a modern steeple.

We passed numerous villages, which appeared thickly inhabited; from one we saw a boat standing off shore apparently full of people, and when she passed close under our stern, we found that she was loaded heavily with slaves.—It appeared that she belonged to one of the ships lying at Ambriz, where she was then going, having come from Kabenda, a distance of one hundred and twenty miles. These wretched beings had thus been exposed in an open boat for about ten days, writhing beneath a burning sun, without a particle of covering to protect their parched and ulcerous skins from the maddening bite of the musquito! We could only regret that we were not authorized to take them from their inhuman masters, and give them once more to their homes and liberty.—The general face of this coast is a kind of red sand-stone cliff, from sixty to one hundred feet in height, parts of which are curiously excavated by the never-ceasing inroads of its boisterous assailant; numerous caves

and fissures offer splendid accomodations to the various amphibious monsters, that abound here. We frequently saw fires along the beach at night, probably with the intention of enticing us on shore, which is a very common custom on the east coast. The natives appear to live in a great measure upon fish, as a great many canoes were constantly seen near every village in the act of fishing.

As we approached the Congo, the water for some distance was much discoloured. This is caused by the body of that immense river running so far into the sea. We felt the effects of it several miles before making Cape Padron, which forms the southern entrance. When we hauled round the Cape, we found the current setting strong against us, which scarcely allowed of our making any way. Having tried in vain for some hours to get ahead, we were at length compelled to anchor, when we found the current was running past us at the rate of about four miles an hour.

On the following morning two boats were sent away, for the purpose of measuring a base line, and to procure soundings. The one in which I went proceeded towards Cape Padron: as we came near the land, we saw several natives, who appeared greatly alarmed at our presence. We tried every means to give them confidence, but could not prevail upon them to approach, fearing we should seize and carry them off; a species of depredation which is frequently practised upon this coast both by the Portuguese and French.—Their plan is to go on shore and mix with the natives, to whom they are apparently very generous, giving them in the first instance all kinds of trinkets and baubles; when they imagine their suspicions are removed, they introduce spirits, which they commence drinking, and soon persuade their intended victims to join in their revelry. The effect upon their unaccustomed natures is speedy intoxication, when their treacherous friends entice them to their boats. Returning reason finds the once free savage groaning in chains, with a mind torn by recollections of those ties of nature and

affection, which are thus so violently and for ever broken! Hundreds are in this manner annually entrapped into perpetual exile and slavery!

We made another attempt to gain the entrance of the river; but although a breeze was blowing sufficiently strong to send us five knots ahead, yet we lost ground at the rate of about three miles an hour. The pinnace, which had left the ship at the same time with me, was absent the whole night, in consequence of getting into a current at the mouth of the river, which carried her to the northward at the rate of about six knots an hour. On the following morning she contrived to reach the ship, all hands being in a state of great exhaustion, from the constant labour to which they had been exposed.

For four days we made numerous attempts to enter the river with the sea-breeze, and were as constantly drifted back to our starting place. On the fifth, the wind having increased, we contrived to get within half a mile of Shark Point, which forms the southern entrance, where we continued under all sail for several hours, during which time we did not get one inch ahead; and, as the wind was falling, we were compelled, in order to keep what we had gained, to come to an anchor. On the following morning, as the sea-breeze, set in strong, we got under all sail, and in about six hours rounded Shark Point, where we found the water quite fresh; then proceeded slowly up the river, sometimes within twenty yards of the shore, in eight or nine fathoms. The width at the mouth is about three miles and a half, but it gets rapidly narrower upon ascending. A quarter of a mile off Shark Point we tried soundings with two hundred fathoms line without finding any bottom. After passing this point, the coast on both banks is composed entirely of mangroves, with the exception of a few sandy bays up some of the numerous creeks on the south side of the river. Before coming to an anchor we observed a schooner lying about two miles higher up, under Portuguese colours.

In the evening, a boat was seen a short distance from the ship, with four black men in her; upon being hailed, one of the party said they were going to Kabinda, a distance of forty miles. Immediately after answering, they begged permission to come on board, when we found, by a few interrogatories, that she was a Portuguese boat sent by the above mentioned schooner for the purpose of discovering our character and intentions. It appeared that she was in great alarm respecting a pirate under Spanish colours, which had lately been committing devastations upon the slavers by coming up the river, when they had got a cargo, and robbing them of their slaves; a species of piracy which, according to report, appeared by no means of uncommon occurrence upon this lawless coast. It forms a strange anomaly, that these spoilers should thus again be subject to the attacks of others so soon as they have obtained their prize—like the ferocious hawk, preying upon the smaller birds of the air—and immediately afterwards becoming himself a mouthful to the lordly eagle.

On the following morning, as we were taking in wood and water, for which this is a very convenient place, several canoes came off with numbers of inhabitants. The costume of these people was entirely that of our first parents, with the exception of some of the *nobility*, who have picked up an occasional jacket. This they wear without any other garment than the bunch of leaves or old piece of dungaree round the middle. These are, perhaps, the most superstitious savages to be met with, relying almost entirely upon their charms for the success of every event of their lives. They are all abundantly supplied with them; and if they find one will not produce the desired effect, they substitute another, *until the effect is produced*! These creatures thought we admired their mode of conducting the ways of Providence, and wondered how "white man," who, they say, "is very big in all tings, no make Feteish!" They are a fine race of blacks, but I believe very treacherous. Their strongest attachment appears to be towards brandy, and I firmly believe any one of

them would sell his whole generation for a single bottle of that stimulating cordial. Several of them speak broken English, which they have picked up from the trading-vessels touching here; and they mentioned amongst other topics, the ill-fated expedition of Captain Tuckey, in his Majesty's ship Congo.

Some of the chiefs, upon coming on board, and having a little brandy given them, seemed to consider it in the same light as the Arab does his salt, and insisted upon our firing a gun to let all around know that we were friends, and come, as they expressed it "to make trade;" under the impression that we intended trafficking for slaves. The gun appeared to be well understood; for immediately afterwards numbers came on board. Their first request was always for a little brandy, which, if complied with, was sure to be followed by "a little more," until David's immortal sow would have been a sober brute by the side of them. When given to understand that we intended proceeding up the river upon the sea-breeze setting in, one of them stood forward and said, that he would immediately bring the wind for us, (having, I suppose, previously observed that it was coming,) and at the same time wished to know whether we should prefer a gentle breeze or a strong one; having received some description of answer, he immediately mounted the poop, and took out one of his Feteish, or charms. He then gave several loud blasts, throwing his arms about in the most violent manner; then paused for a few minutes, standing in the most ridiculous attitude, when he commenced expostulating warmly with Mr. Feteish for not obeying his first commands. His stony-hearted hearer was not, however, to be bullied out of a breeze; this our interceder determined to turn to his own advantage by requesting a little brandy to coax him into good-humour. Upon our indulging his whim, it was highly ridiculous to see the vagabond take a mouthful, and go through all the motions of spitting it on his charm, taking at the same time the greatest care not to expend more than one drop up-

on the obstinate Feteish; who, in spite of this eloquence and liberality, would not exert himself in our cause. Having continued this mummery for some time, and finding no more brandy was to be obtained, he left off his incantations, with an assurance that the breeze had been sent for, and would shortly be with us. Patience fortunately did more for us than the antics of the savage, and in an hour or two we obtained the requisite gale, when we proceeded up the southern side of the river, to a place called Scotchman's Nose, a distance of seventeen miles.

Monkeys are extremely numerous at this place, each of the banks being a perfect colony of these intellectual brutes, who here shine in society by comparison with their human relatives. In many instances, I have seen more sagacity displayed by this animal, than the other natives of the woods which they inhabit; they keep a day and night watch constantly on the look-out, who, immediately upon any stranger appearing in their domain, gives a signal to all friends and relations to be on the *qui vive*! When this has been given, it becomes a most difficult matter to see one, although they can be heard around in every direction, and an occasional pair of eyes, or bit of a tail may be seen peeping from behind some neighbouring branch or tree. Having the organ of "*destructiveness*" very prominent, I was induced upon one occasion to shoot at an impertinent fellow, who, I could not help thinking, had been amusing himself at my expense quite long enough, chattering on each side of me without my getting a glimpse of him during the whole of my walk. At one unlucky moment, he appeared before me with a most malicious grin upon his countenance, when I levelled my gun and fired: immediately after the report, I thought all the imps of darkness were rebuking me for my cruelty, by the various discordant sounds which broke out on every side. When silence ensued, I heard gentle wailings of so pitiable a description, and so much like those of a human being, that it was some time before I could convince myself I had not

wounded one of my boat's crew. At first, I thought the unfortunate little object of my aim had escaped from the fate which I had intended him, when, after a slight effort to retain his hold, I observed him fall to the earth from the bough on which he had been perched. Upon going to the spot, I found the wounded animal moaning in the agonies of death with a hand placed upon its bleeding side. When I approached, it did not attempt to move, but fixed a large pair of eyes upon me with a look which I never shall forget, and, I thought pointed to the wound, as if to reproach me for the act. As the appeal came home to my feelings, and the poor little victim of my cruelty appeared in great pain, I sent another ball into its head, to end at once its suffering, and then turned from the spot, leaving the lifeless little body with a determination never again to amuse myself at the expense of humanity.

Wild parrots, and many other birds of beautiful plumage, are here found in great numbers, a few of which we procured.

Upon arriving at Scotchman's Nose, two boats were dispatched; myself in the gig to survey the southern shore, and Lieutenant Boteler in the pinnance to cape Palmeiro, which forms the northern entrance of the river. The breadth at Scotchman's Nose is not more than one mile and a half, with rather shallow water. As the weather was fine, and the Barracouta had dropped down with the stream for the purpose of taking soundings, at sunset I anchored my boat about two hundred yards off shore for the night, and in the morning continued the survey. We entered a small river to breakfast, where we observed several canoes making for the opposite side, in evident fear at our approach; they got quickly to land, and, leaving their boats on the beach, took to the bush, where they resisted all our attempts to draw them out. On leaving this river we met another of our boats, which had been sent to assist me in the survey.

Going on board in the evening, I was much surprised to hear that the natives had attempted an attack upon Lieutenant Boteler and his crew, particularly as they are in general considered very docile and friendly upon this coast. It appeared that when near Cape Palmeiro, the pinnace, whilst running along shore, got into shoal water, and shortly afterwards took the ground, when they had some difficulty in getting off. The inhabitants of a small creek just by, observing her so close in, and some apparent confusion existing, immediately took to their canoes, and in a few minutes about thirty of these, mustering in all one hundred and twenty men, came round the point of the creek, pulling with great velocity towards the boat; fortunately for her, she had by this time contrived to gain deeper water, as, when just within musket-shot, they set up a most horrid war-whoop, and dashed on nearly in a line towards the pinnace. Lieutenant Boteler by this time had no doubt of their hostile intentions, and desired his men to fire a volley of musketry over their heads, as a kind of notice to quit; this, however produced no effect, and they still continued pulling on, upon which he fired another volley; this producing no more effect than the former, and as his small party, only twelve men, would have had no chance at close quarters against their numbers, he ordered a long one-pounder to be fired *at* them; this appeared to *astonish the natives* amazingly, and they began quickly to disperse, a few only continuing their course; but a musquet or two soon produced the same effect upon them. To secure their retreat and prevent a rally, the long gun was again fired amongst them by way of farewell, which intimidated them effectually, so they all pulled towards the shore with the utmost speed. It was fortunate they were so easily disheartened, as, had they got alongside, their increasing numbers must ultimately have overcome the boat's crew, and a general massacre would have been the consequence. As neither their *Morning Post* nor *Gazette* ever mentioned the loss sustained, we had no opportunity of learning what execution our guns did amongst these hostile savages; but as our

men were well practised in the use of their arms, they no doubt got a lesson which may prove serviceable to European ships visiting this coast in future. In justice to our commanders, I must here state, that we had the most positive orders never to fire a shot at the natives, unless the most urgent necessity required it. This principle of humanity was strictly attended to; and I feel confident in stating, that during our constant intercourse with these ignorant and generally treacherous savages, not one drop of blood was shed which was not justified by self-preservation.

Numerous islands are seen constantly floating down the Congo, some of which have rather a picturesque appearance. They are formed by mangrove bushes and other loose trees, which collect upon the banks, and are then carried away by the rush of water, generally takes place after heavy rains. The inhabitants of the upper part of the river make use of these by fastening their canoes to them, when they gain an easy and expeditious passage down, at the rate of six or seven miles an hour. Vessels on this coast are frequently deceived with regard to their situation by these apparent islands, which sometimes drift a long way to seaward, at the same time that they serve as guides to those who are acquainted with their situation, and from whence they come.

It is extremely difficult to get any provisions at this part of the river, the natives are in so miserable a state of poverty; if you can persuade them to procure some, two or three days must elapse before they can be obtained. The principal rendezvous of slavers is a place named Talltrees, situated about forty miles up this river.

CHAPTER III.

Departure from the Congo. Bay of Kabinda. Treachery of some of the black tribes. Mayumba. Camina. Cape Lopez. Aspect of the coast. African notions of personal charms. Frenchmen at Feteesh Town. Ludicrous interview with a native king. Local respect for monkeys. Survey of the river Nazareth. Instances of thievery, and their punishment.

HAVING accomplished the principal object of our coming into the river Congo, which was to procure wood, water, and such fresh provisions as could be met with, on the fourth day we weighed anchor, and continued our course to the northward; but as the wind was too light to admit of our making much progress, we sent the pinnace in-shore to survey. The country from the Congo to Kabinda is particularly fertile, and has a most luxuriant appearance, with, I should imagine, a large population, as we observed numerous canoes fishing. In the evening of the second day from our leaving the Congo we anchored off Kabinda, and on the following morning got into the bay with the sea-breeze. This is a small but very good harbour for moderate sized vessels, being one mile and a half in length, with about five fathoms water in the deepest part. Situated at the head of the bay is a large town,* where the king resides. The huts here are well built and capacious, and we found the natives very desirous of "making trade." The

* When a town is spoken of in this Journal as being large, the reader must not picture to his imagination a city of streets, squares, and palaces, but a few rudely-formed huts, projected by necessity, and constructed by instinct, unassisted by art; yet in a country where the most important is not larger than a European village such a distinction serves in some measure as a guide to their relative sizes.

surrounding country, as seen from the anchorage, appeared in a high state of cultivation; but whether the soil is indebted to the inhabitants, or Nature, we could not determine. The latter is whimsically prolific on some parts of this coast, while at others her sterile frown withers every bud of vegetation as it shoots forth. We were here told many instances of treachery practised by the tribes on the northern shore of the Congo. They were represented as watching every opportunity to attack the Portuguese boats, when, in case of their succeeding, they use their prisoners in the most inhuman manner, torturing the unfortunate whites, and ultimately burning them; while the blacks are preserved to be sold as slaves. We found five vessels at anchor in the harbour; and as the principal traffic of the place is in slaves, we had little doubt of their intentions, in spite of their vehement assertions that ivory was the sole object of their desires. In fact, had we believed one half the vows and protestations made by the various masters of traders upon this coast, we and the poor elephants would have had enough to do; for the vilest slaver that plods his blood-stained way* along these seas, will swear to you by all the numerous saints and sinners the Catholic calendar can boast of, that he comes for ivory, and "because it is a pleasant cruise from the Brazils," as one fellow had the impudence to tell me, without stirring a muscle of his cut-throat, Portuguese-looking countenance. I feel confident, that if but one-third of the vessels got any supply which

* This must not be considered a mere figure of speech, as an extraordinary sagacity in the shark renders it a horrible reality. These destructive monsters appear to know the cargo which the vessel is freighted with, and are constantly in attendance during their course, looking out with the voracity so justly attributed to them for their daily meal; nay, I have heard many, who were likely to be well acquainted in such matters, state, that they had not a doubt but that frequently the same sharks have followed slave-ships the whole of their voyage from Africa to the Brazils: and, as seldom many hours passed without a fresh bait to entice them, this is not at all improbable. Their meal is provided by the sufferings of human nature overcoming the fortitude of despair; when the miserable victim sinks beneath the accumulated load of woes and disease, to regain his liberty by the hand of death! The ypoq is then thrown overboard to the expecting shark, who, as he greedily carries off his prey, leaves a slight eddy, tinged with blood, to mark his course. This is the tomb of many thousand slaves!—their only requiem the rolling billow and the howling wind—their only sepulchre the monster's jaws!

profess being in the ivory trade,' not a tooth would be left in the head of any elephant or hippopotamus upon the coast!

Several canoes came alongside with stock, which met with a ready sale at moderate prices: for an old calico shirt or pocket-handkerchief we procured a pair of large fowls, and sweet potatoes enough for a week. The natives were very desirous of procuring tobacco; but as our crew were not overstocked we did not barter much in that article. Parrots are very numerous here, enlivening the woods with the most shrill and discordant noises.

The boats having surveyed the whole of this harbour in the course of a day, we proceeded along the coast, which continued to bear the most fertile appearance, terminated by high red cliffs seen in the distance. Just before making Loango Bay, we passed several small villages, and the country became very low and woody. Observing an English schooner at anchor up the bay, we hauled in for her, and sent a boat on board, which shortly returned with the master. She proved to be a vessel from Liverpool, had been on the coast fifteen months, *really* trading for ivory, and had succeeded in procuring ten tons. This bay is about two miles and a half in depth, and affords good anchorage, but we were led to believe its shores very thinly inhabited, as not a single canoe came off with stock. We continued our course, surveying along shore and coming-to at night, until we made Point Matoote, which forms the southern extremity of Mayumba Bay. Just off this place there is a most dangerous ridge of rocks, partly visible above water, with a channel of three fathoms and a half between it and the Point; but it is advisable to avoid it entirely, if possible, by going outside. Mayumba was formerly a place of much trade, but is now in a wretched state of poverty and dilapidation. The probable cause of this is the anchorage not being good, as a heavy swell generally sets in when the wind blows on shore, in consequence of their being no shelter, unless by lying close in upon the southern side of the bay, which

for many reasons is not advisable. We now came upon a very flat swampy coast, passing the Sette, a small river with a bar at its entrance, and numerous small creeks covered on each side with thick jungle, which almost gave us the fever to look at, so humid and pestiferous did they appear. We next came to off Camina, a small bight, with a town of the same name, where several canoes came alongside with stock. These were the first we met with rowing oars instead of paddles: they introduced themselves by asking if we came to traffic in slaves, and expressed much astonishment and dissatisfaction upon being informed that such was not our object.

The following morning we again weighed, and passed a very low sandy country, with numerous small creeks, apparently forming woody islands in the interior. The next place we made was Cape Lopez, which we hauled round, and then came to, it being nearly dark. At day-light the following morning, we sent boats away surveying, and to cut wood; they met with many large herds of buffaloes, but very wild and shy. The Doctor contrived, however, to shoot one, which, being in high perfection, proved a great acquisition to our fresh stock. Some of the party brought on board various specimens of beautiful shells, which had been picked up on the beach; fish and turtle were also found very abundant at this part of the bay. During the night we had a storm, accompanied with the most vivid and terrific thunder and lightning.

In the morning we stood across the bay; when about five miles and a half from the Cape, we met with a very dangerous shoal, extending nearly two leagues seaward from Prince's Point, some parts of which can be distinguished by a ripple: between this and the Cape the water is very deep, with a muddy bottom. When we hauled round this shoal, we observed a brig at anchor, and shortly afterwards a small schooner. As we continued beating up to the head of the bay against a strong tide, all the boats were dispatched to survey. I took

the pinnace and went on the eastern coast, but a heavy rain prevented my making much progress. We passed several hippopotami, considerably larger than those we had generally seen. Finding the rain continue, I made the boat snug for the night, (taking every precaution to keep out the torrent which came down with soaking violence,) and succeeded so far as only to find my night-cap quite wet upon awaking in the morning, my head having, it appeared, occupied the only spot through which a drop had penetrated. Having fortified the inward man, we commenced our work, and in the course of the day were enabled, with the assistance of a fresh breeze, to complete nearly thirteen miles of coast. This side of the bay is one continued mangrove, with the exception of about three quarters of a mile, consisting of a sandy beach. These mangroves bear the most feverish-looking aspect it is possible to conceive, and are the general boundary of all rivers upon this part of the coast. Their being composed entirely of mud prevents the possibility of any landing being effected in the neighbourhood; they are the resort of every disgusting and venomous insect and reptile—

> "With all the infections that the sun sucks up
> From bogs, fens, flats, ——— !"

The effluvium from these pestilential marshes, when the burning sun has been upon them for a few hours, is of the most revolting nature, being an exhalation from all the filth which has accumulated for centuries in the river, and here undergoes the gradual process of decomposition. They are the dread of Europeans, and to us, who had frequently to sleep in boats for many nights together, surrounded by them on all sides, they proved very fatal; seldom were we fortunate enough to escape from fever, or other sad memento to remind us of their deadly influence.

Towards sun-set, I anchored for the night off the town, which is called Fetcesh Town, situated just by the before mentioned small sandy beach: while running down for this spot, we found a brig at anchor, and were informed that she

was French, trading for ivory (*doubtless black,*) and tortoise-shell. Upon coming-to off the town, we observed several people waving handkerchiefs: this being an article of civilisation not yet known amongst the natives, nay, not even the receptacle from which it receives its pre-nomen, I concluded the proprietors must be of European extraction. How strange that such a conclusion was inevitable! Is it not also strange that Nature, when she made noses, omitted to make pocket handkerchiefs! She surely must have thought we could do without them, or she would at least have made pockets. The inference was about as flattering to our enlightened nasal organs, as that of the traveller who was delighted at seeing a man upon a gibbet, because it convinced him that he was in a civilised country: so we hailed the pocket-handkerchiefs as an emblem of civilisation. But the most satisfactory conclusion we can come to is, that white, or cultivated noses, require more attention than the black, unsophisticated probosces of rude uncultivated nature!

These cogitations induced me to hoist an ensign, upon which a canoe came off with a Frenchman in her, who stated, upon coming alongside, that he belonged to the brig before mentioned, and, on getting into my boat, farther informed me, that the natives had insisted on his coming off to discover our character and intentions, as they were greatly afraid we were pirates. Seeing a large boat well manned with white faces was certainly enough to raise their suspicions, however little we might feel it as a compliment. Many things combine in this country to deprive a man of his vanity, and make him almost wish to possess the perfections so much prized in the land he is in. Some of our handsome fellows in their own conceit, including myself, were much wonder-struck at finding that Nature had not one standard of beauty for all the world. I used to consider myself an uncommonly *good-looking fellow!* and, when walking down Bond-street upon half-pay, counted on numerous conquests *en passant;* but when we arrived on this tasteless coast, I could produce no effect upon the

Venuses of Hottentot; their black hearts, hard as the forehead of Satan, resisted the light darts of a northern Cupid; each charm here lost its power: lips, formed like the urchin's bow, and red as melting cherries, were eclipsed by the letter-box pouters of the native Adonises; the nose of sculptured beauty gave place to the bisected baking-pear; while the hair of glossy brightness lost every charm when put in competition with the roasted, wool-looking stuff on the head of their beaux. *This* was another attack upon our vanity; because our faces were white, these discerning natives thought we *must* be thieves! Well, to continue.

The Frenchman having convinced himself of our honesty and peaceful intentions, went on shore and reported to that effect; this, I afterwards learnt, gave great satisfaction to the hearers. Having received an invitation from my visitor to come and see him, I went on shore in the evening, previously taking every precaution to guard against any attack, which the treacherous character of the natives upon this coast always rendered probable; for, with every appearance of friendship and good-will, they are sometimes watching a favourable opportunity to knock you on the head for the sake of your buttons and scalp. Upon our landing, and having sent the boat from the beach, several people came from the bush, who, I have no doubt, were stationed there in order to make observations upon our conduct. These fellows, seeing only one man leave the boat besides myself, concluded we had not any hostile intentions, and so came forward and joined us, shaking hands in the most cordial manner; they then led me to the house of my friend the Frenchman, which was a native hut provided for him by the king; and as most of these habitations were very well built, and spacious, he was pretty comfortably lodged. Upon entering, I found four other Frenchmen, belonging to the brig, with my introducer, all of whom said they considered themselves as perfectly safe on shore, the natives being extremely docile and friendly. But I was led to imagine this civility lasted just so long as they could get

any thing by their visitors; and I was farther convinced of this by the very familiar manner in which they helped themselves: any one of these polite vagabonds would walk in without the least ceremony, and pour himself out a tumbler of brandy, or whatever else happened to be upon the table; then leave the hut, without expressing a sound or sign of thanks for the honour he did himself; and, as the Frenchmen did not consider it politic to interfere, they had plenty of visitors. Some of the natives understand a little English, which they have acquired from an intercourse with our traders, many of whom make annual calls here to obtain *ivory* and *palm-oil* (say *slaves*.)

About ten o'clock I left the Frenchmen, and took a walk into the town, surrounded by an immense concourse of the inhabitants; some requesting me to sleep at their houses, others to come and drink, many begging for presents, and *a few* offering them. Amidst this turbulent crew, who became at last rather *hot-pressive*, I could not observe much, and in fact considered it advisable to be off, and and therefore directed my steps as quickly as possible towards the beach, which I had some difficulty in reaching. I found the boat lying a little way from the shore, waiting my arrival; upon her landing, all the natives stood some distance back, but, immediately the oars were out, they came running to the water's edge, calling in numerous different keys, and modes of expression, to beg I would come on shore again; amongst this variety of sounds, one voice above the rest said, in good English, and rather a sepulchral tone—"If you don't come on shore in the morning, we will come off and murder you all!" This friendly notice did not cause me much uneasiness, such threats seldom being *made* when it is intended to execute them; I therefore considered it as merely designed to alarm us, and determined to make farther inquiry as to the author, it appearing quite evident that none but an English tongue could possibly have given so good a pronunciation. I accordingly went on shore the next day to breakfast: upon my landing, a vast number of the inhabitants were on the beach, waiting my arrival, many with

fowls, tortoise-shell, sweet potatoes, &c. for sale, and others merely to gratify their curiosity, which feeling we found to be as prevalent in the wilds of Africa, as all know it to be amongst the enlightened sons and daughters of Europe. I purchased a pair of beautiful grey parrots, for a yard or two of coarse calico; and a couple of hippopotamus's teeth, for another fathom of the same stuff.

After breakfast, I went with my friend the Frenchman, to pay a visit to the king, who resides in a part of the town walled in for his seraglio and household. Having arrived at the *palace*, we had to mount a rudely-constructed ladder, which required great care in handling to avoid a precipitate retreat; we were then ushered into a spacious levee-room very neatly built of plank, the walls being partly covered with pieces of looking glass, and numerous pictures and prints, most of which were turned *upside down!* He also possessed several chairs of European manufacture: these costly articles were held in great estimation, and were the envy of surrounding princes! They had been given to him as a kind of bonus, previously to commencing traffic, by the masters of slave and other traders, he having in his royal will established it as a law, that no "captain of any vessel shall trade, until he has paid an introductory or retaining fee!" After waiting in this room a few minutes, his majesty entered—without a flourish of trumpets! His royal niggership appeared verging on sixty, extremely stout, and suffering greatly from elephantiasis, each of his legs being the size of a moderate man's body. The whimsicality of his costume produced, I fear an evident commotion in my risible faculties, which I was apprehensive might hurt the royal feelings: it was composed of a long coarse robe, or piece of cloth, which, after the manner of the cobler's stall, served him for jacket, for waistcoat, for trowsers and every thing. This garment of many occupations was wrapped loosely round his corpulent figure, with his bare arms hanging outside, having forced their way out by means of a couple of slits in the cloth;

sleeves being too great an effort of ingenuity for the tailors of Feteesh Town. Through an occasional opening might be observed a sad lack of Irish, or if any existed, it was of the same texture and complexion as his face. The majestic head was partly covered by an old brown beaver hat, with a portion of the rim hanging over one ear, and the front strangely distorted, the hat being squeezed on to a head about twice as large as it was originally intended for. His royal feet were destitute of any covering whatever, he not having yet added a pair of shoes to his regalia. This was the whole of his gear, and most probably his wardrobe; the unnatural proportion of his limbs having prevented him from dazzling our sight by the splendour of his crown jewels, we therefore saw him *au naturel!* It was highly ridiculous to see his efforts at dignity, which certainly terminated in a most ludicrous failure; and from this I am strongly led to suspect that nature, at least black nature, is not dignified in her unadorned or primitive state. But, to continue a description of our interview, his majesty very graciously shook me by the hand, and then conducted me to the head of the room, where seating himself, he desired an attendant to bring me a chair, which being done, a short pause ensued as usual, when he commenced by asking through an interpreter, "what news there was abroad!" This was uttered in a very mild, friendly tone as if about entering upon a long conversation. I must confess this general question rather puzzled me at first; but, feeling confident that the inquirer did not know France from America, I answered in the first words that came, to the effect that nothing new had transpired since the Dutch had taken Holland! He appeared much pleased with this answer, and, I have no doubt, thought I took him for a very well-informed erudite king, as he was evidently gratified at having asked a question that admitted of a reply; and, like a wise general, he said no more, lest he should lose the laurels he had gained. I now opened my business, by first requiring an explanation of the threat that had been held out on the preceding evening, which his majesty expressed much surprise and anger at. The

interpreter informed us that he had no doubt this observation was made, in order to alarm us, by a white boy, who had been living in the town for about seven years, and gave me to understand I might see him at the house of a Captain Brandy. Having been satisfied upon this point, I next stated my expectations of the ship's arrival in the afternoon, when most probably the captain would pay his most gracious majesty a visit. He observed in answer to this, that he should be very happy to see him and would supply us with any thing he might, require, and the place afforded. Here our conference ended, and, having again shaken hands, we descended the ladder. This kingly personage, is, it appears, a great *bon vivant*, and drinks brandy, by tumblers-full, with as much satisfaction as any young lady sips her toast and water. He is also possessed of about three hundred wives, with nearly as many *etceteras*, some of whom, report said, were very fine women, but report here is *black*, and as thick lips and flat noses are the fashion in this part of the world, my curiosity was not sufficiently excited to induce me to risk my head, in order to obtain a peep at the dismal beauties of his harem. I had no other opportunity of judging, as only one antiquated nigger lady,—black, and shining as jet,—entered during my audience, and who, I afterwards learned, was the eldest of his *fair* stock of frail ones. The government of this despot is of the most arbitrary nature, and he takes off heads for the most trifling offences; nay, I was informed that, when in the humour, he is not very particular whether the unfortunate victim has committed any. He has one very striking peculiarity for majesty, which is, a great delight in performing with his own hand, the part of executioner;* whether this arises from principles of economy, or a natural taste for such refined amusements, I am not able to determine, but this *kingly Jack-Ketch* frequently decapitates half a dozen of his *loving* subjects before breakfast.

*This in a country where the expenses of the state call for retrenchment, would be a great annual saving, worthy the attention of a certain calculating *Member of Vulgar Fractions*, whose eloquence and talents have found their level in an accurate knowledge of subtraction and upon whom it is resolved to confer the rather humorous degree of *L. S. D.!*

His sway extends over a very large territory, which produces a great quantity of ivory, tortoise-shell, and every description of tropical fruit.

The town is situated on the right entrance of the river Nazareth, and contains about three hundred houses, neatly built of cane; the inhabitants are all armed with either a spear, or musket, which latter they obtain from the traders, and much value. Buffaloes are very numerous in the neighbourhood, together with elephants, lions, tigers, and other wild beasts, while the bay abounds with fish, and its shores with with birds of beautiful plumage.

I had the white boy mentioned to me by the interpreter, brought to me at the house of the Frenchman; he appeared about fourteen years of age, and was born of English parents. The account given by himself was "that he had come out in a merchant-ship, where he was very badly treated; this induced him to run away, and, getting into the woods, he remained there until the vessel left, he then came into the town and told his story to the king, who put him under the care of a Captain Brandy, by whom, as well as by the rest of the natives, he had been, and still was, treated with the greatest kindness." He spoke the native language, and, had in fact, assumed the dress and manners of the inhabitants in every particular, having like them no covering, but a small piece of cloth fastened round the loins. I tried to persuade him to come on board, and return to England, but without success, as nothing would induce him to leave these people, who had treated him so kindly.

Having had my gun brought on shore, I walked into the woods, with dozens of the natives at my heels, to see if I could procure some *rara avis*, as an addendum to my humble boat fare; but having beat about for some hours without any success, I steered my course towards the boat. On my way—disappointment having, I suppose, made me pugnacious—I saw several monkeys, who all commenced chatter-

ing in the most provoking manner, as if in derision of my empty game-bag; I bore it for some time like a philosopher, but at length losing all patience, and having forgotten my former resolutions about humanity, monkeys, &c. I raised my gun in order to pepper one young rascal, who, I fancied, was pursuing me with his impertinence; and, in the malice of my heart, I had resolved to have the fellow hushed, and eat him out of revenge. Just as I was about to pull, one of the natives knocked down my arm, begging at the same time, that I would not fire, and saying, "No shoot! dat me God, dat me Feteesh!"—This saved master pug from mixing in the society of pickled walnuts, and me from partaking of hashed monkey. I afterwards learnt that these people worship this animal, as one of their principal Feteeshes, and trust greatly to it in any matter relating to life or death; the consequence of this respect being paid them is, that they lose all fear, and, never meeting with injury from mankind, are much more domesticated than those which are subject to their cruelties. Upon my return to town, after shaking hands with about 200 of the natives, a work of some time, I contrived to reach my boat, and shortly afterwards perceived the Barracouta standing down; I therefore got under weigh and in about three hours arrived on board.

The following morning Captain Vidal went on shore to visit the king; upon his return we made sail, and stood across the bay towards Cape Lopez: the wood is very thick near this Cape, but the trees mostly deciduous, on account of the swampy soil in which they grow; this induces me to think the country about here is very unhealthy, but the natives contradict it. We sent a party brooming, and another to cut wood, for which this place is particularly convenient. Various beautiful shells were picked up by several of the people employed on shore: and one of our young gentlemen observed a large alligator. The entomologist would find much at this place to attract his attention, but our short stay allowed no time for collecting. The principal object of our again

visiting this Cape was to accomplish some necessary observations; which having done, we again stood over towards the town, and anchored near the French brig, about four miles from the shore. We sent boats away to survey the river Nazareth, which runs through a very fertile country, and empties itself into this bay near Feteesh Town. A boat was also sent on shore to obtain stock. One of the crew produced a knife before the natives, that appeared to strike their fancy immediately. The man offered it for some fowls, upon which it was handed over for examination, when they commenced passing it from one to the other with rather suspicious quickness, and suddenly a fellow from the mob started into the bushes. Jack, not seeing his knife, suspected instantly that he had carried it off, so without any hesitation gave chase, and after a short time returned leading the culprit by the ear, (which he called *collaring*,) with the stolen property in his hand. First, giving him a short lecture on the impropriety of his conduct, which was like throwing pearls to swine, he next deprived him of the knife and then commenced hammering his thick hide with a hearty good will, until he was tired, when he allowed him to depart, apparently not much *blacker* than when first caught. This wholesome correction was a salutary lesson to the others: and this was not the first occasion upon which we found a rogue amongst honest men: the following instance in particular came under my own observation. Whilst in Delagoa Bay, on the east coast, numbers of the natives would come on board daily, and form a regular market, bringing all descriptions of stock, which they bartered with the crew, when we sometimes had above a hundred on board at the same time. Upon one occasion, as a canoe was leaving us, crowded with natives going on shore, some of their countrymen were looking over the ship's side at them, one of these spectators whilst speaking to a friend in the canoe, observed something bright in the tye* of another; he instantly descended to the boat, and very soon had a fellow handed on

* Tye—the piece of cloth worn round the waist is so called.

board, upon whom he found a part of the copper binnacle lamp, which had been lying somewhere near the compass-box; the whole of the people from the canoe immediately returned, and about sixty of them fell upon the culprit with any thing that came to hand, and would very soon have dispatched him to the other world, or rendered him of no use in this had not Captain Owen humanely interfered to stop their desperate castigation.

CHAPTER IV.

Progress northward. Sandy Point. Cape Clara. The river Gaboon. Reflections at sight of the English flag. King Glass Town and its natives. A miserable instance of human suffering. Cape Esteiras. Corisco Bay and Islands. Tobacco at a premium! The River Moondah. Musquito Islands. Detached service of track surveying in a boat. Suppression of hostile intentions. Precautions as to anchoring on a suspicious coast. A tragic episode. Instance of Portuguese treachery and cruelty.

HAVING completed our survey of this harbour, (Port Lopez,) and made some necessary repairs, we proceeded to the northward. The coast for a considerable distance from the Cape is extremely fertile, but apparently has not many inhabitants, as we only observed two small villages along shore for many miles. As we approached Sandy Point, the country became very low and thickly wooded to the water's edge, the interior rising gradually to rich fertile hills. Sandy Point or Corner forms the southern entrance to the river Gaboon, off which place the sea is constantly bubbling and agitated in consequence of the shoalness of the water, and the bottom being very foul. Having rounded this corner, we made Cape Clara, which forms the northern point of the river, and shortly after came-to, when a boat of European structure came alongside, but the head man was so thoroughly drunk, we could obtain no information from him: it appeared they were on their way to Cape Lopez, and that the boat had formerly belonged to a Portuguese vessel, whose crew had been murdered some where in this neighbourhood.

On the following day, we sent two boats away for the purpose of sounding the entrance to the river, while the ship stood across to the westward; but the sea breeze, falling, compelled us shortly to anchor, when we observed two Spanish brigs lying a little higher up on the southern shore. In the morning, some large canoes with natives came on board, who brought a very seasonable supply of poultry and vegetables. Upon the sea breeze setting in we got under weigh, and, entering the river, observed the two brigs standing out under all sail: we afterwards heard they had been trading for slaves, and quitted immediately upon our approach, fearing we might deprive them of their illicit cargo. As we were proceeding up the river to Parrot Island, we passed an English brig at anchor. Those who have never beheld our national colours floating proudly in the breeze, far from their native gales, cannot conceive the mingled feeling of pride and pleasure with which it fills the bosom: to see that flag —the envy and terror of the world—receiving homage and respect from every nation of the universe, is a sight that makes the Briton proud of his country, and boastful of her fame: even the savage African pays the respect of fear to that well known emblem of the ocean's queen; he has learnt that honour, courage, and integrity, are always found beneath the staff which supports it. Let none, therefore, who were born under its protecting shade, forget what they owe the soil where it was first planted; for the shield of Britannia covers her sons wherever fate or inclination may lead them; and the best safeguard a man possesses in a foreign country is the name of—*Englishman!!*. But, to return from this national digression.

On the morning of the following day, several canoes came on board to barter. These people were from a town situated on the north side of the river, called King Glass Town; they appeared extremely docile and very desirous of making trade with the English; a character quite opposite to that which report had given them, or rather the jealousy of their neighbours to the southward; in fact many of them had certi-

ficates from different masters of vessels, both English and Portuguese, wherein they mentioned having left with them articles of barter to a very large amount, which on their return were faithfully given up or accounted for; and, as they have great intercourse with our traders, many of them speak English with some fluency. We anchored near the brig which lay just off the town, where the British colours were hoisted—they having procured an ensign from some vessel, and not being particular:—numerous canoes immediately came on board, well stocked with fruit, fowls, &c. and through the master of the brig, who possessed some influence, we obtained a quantity of goats and vegetables, which are, otherwise, very difficult to procure in consequence of their scarcity. During the day, a man employed in the watering party lost a shirt that he had been washing, and had laid out to dry, and which he suspected to have been stolen by one of the natives. Upon the officer informing the king of this, he immediately had a consultation with his Feteesh, and by its assistance, as he informed us, the man was shortly discovered with the stolen article in his possession: his majesty gave orders for him to be publicly whipped, after which the shirt was returned.

The *ladies* came on board in great numbers, never having seen "a man-of-war ship," as they expressed it, before.—These women are possessed of much natural grace and beauty (*noires*,) with, in some instances, shapes that would make the Venus de Medicis blush at her own deformity: every facility was given to form a correct idea of their symmetry, as the everlasting fashion amongst the ladies of King Glass Town has been founded upon the oft quoted passage, that

> "——— Beauty
> Needs not the foreign aid of ornament;
> But is, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most!"

What a whimsical young gentleman that Love is! and how unfairly he is charged with directing his darts only at the heart of his victims: could we, as the Irishman says, but have

seen these beauties in the *dark*, many of us would have been subdued by their tender blandishments; but the eye resisted the well-shot arrows of their sable Cupid, and as that is at least the high road to the heart, he gave it up in despair. Polygamy is here allowed at discretion, and his majesty is considered extremely moderate, as he only possesses *fifty* lawful wives. The king's name is Qua Ben; and he appears a very popular monarch, as all his subjects speak in very high terms of his justice and other royal virtues.

Whilst taking a stroll through the town with two or three hundred people at my heels, they led me to a large building which they called their prison. Here I saw a miserable-looking mortal stretched on his back upon the ground, with a spar of wood extending his arms, and another his legs this was done by fastening the wrists and insteps to the end of the stick at their utmost stretch, which placed the body in exactly the position of a person crucified upon the cross of St. Andrew, and deprived him of the power to move in any direction. I was informed that he had been lying in this posture for many weeks; and as food was given him daily, life still remained—a mass of corruption, to be slowly destroyed by the animals of too disgusting a nature to mention, which were actually devouring the living flesh from his bones. Sense enough still remained to make him feel the constant torment of his active destroyers, and a hollow groan occasionally burst forth as his lacerated body writhed beneath the keen agony of their venomous bites—

> "It was as if the dead could feel
> The icy worm around them steal,
> And shudder, as the reptiles creep
> To revel o'er their rotting sleep,
> Without the power to scare away
> The cold consumers of their clay."

I shuddered with horror as I gazed on this victim of cruelty, and would gladly have discharged my pistol at his head, to end at once his lingering torments. I had frequently heard the effect produced on the mind by a spectacle of ex-

treme human suffering, but never until that moment fully experienced it. No imagination less powerful than that which delineated the horrors of Frankenstein, could possibly describe the picture of this mortal *mouldering in life*. The soul appeared just clinging to the rotting body, until it became too pestiferous for the pure essence to dwell in; the eye seemed unwilling to contemplate the scene, and turned or fell from it, while a kind of giddiness overcame the sight, which gazed as it does upon objects in a dream: I felt also a kind of sickness or loathing, with an inclination to leave the spot, without the power; and I should have remained there, had not the natives, perceiving, I suppose, the excitement under which I laboured, hurried, nay, almost carried me away. Is it not strange that these savages, debased and ignorant as they are, should have discovered a greater refinement upon torture than the more enlightened states of Europe? That prototype of hell, the inquisition, could never boast of so sublime a one in the list of its numerous and ingenious devices, to extort confession from the racked body! Is it not still more strange, that man will inflict a punishment of greater suffering upon a fellow creature, than upon the brute which is subject to his will? for not one of these savages, who, with unfeeling apathy, stood unconcerned spectators of this human being's anguish, would have seen any other living thing in the same situation without at once ending its existence as an act of humanity! They told me that this victim of barbarity had committed an offence of great magnitude in that country. It is one of their customs, whenever a person of any note dies, to bury the whole or greater part of his property with him, under the impression that he may find it serviceable in the other world; this man had been discovered robbing one of these graves, acting doubtless upon a very natural and sensible principle, that what is good for the living is of no use to the dead: but it being considered a most atrocious crime amongst these people, the punishment is that which I have attempted to describe. Before our leaving, I was rejoiced to hear that he had been released by the hand of death, a more merciful hand than that which kept him there.

The natives came off in great numbers upon hearing of our intended departure, bringing parrots, honey, plantains, bananas, and every description of provision, all of which were much in request, and a great deal of trading took place; when, having completed a survey of the river, and recruited our stock of wood and water, we weighed and stood along shore to the northward. The next place we made was Cape Esteiras, which forms the southern entrance to Corisco Bay: we then came upon the two islands of Corisco, where several canoes attempted to come on board; but having a fresh breeze, and not wanting them, we did not let them gain the vessel. These people are reported as being very unfriendly to white faces; but, in all probability, like nearly all upon the coast, they are not so towards any benefit to be derived from them. This it is in Africa, as well as Europe, that procures politeness, and the savage has now sense enough not to eat you, if he can profit more by letting you remain unmasticated; which may be considered at least one step towards civilization.

We anchored just off Corisco Bay, and shortly afterwards one man in a canoe, who I suppose thought himself a hero, came alongside from the town near Cape Esteiras. This fellow brought some plantains and fruit to dispose of, for brandy or whatever else he could get. Bringing his stock on board, he commenced bargaining; but whilst in the middle of his dealings, the boatswain piped to supper, upon which the nigger became so much alarmed, that he immediately made a spring from the place where he stood, clear over the ship's side into his canoe, and commenced pulling with all his might ashore, having left his stores behind him, for the benefit of his customers.

Leaving the ship at anchor in the bay, on the following morning I was sent in a boat for the purpose of track-surveying the southern shore, and accordingly stood in for the entrance to the river Moondah. About the middle of the day we anchored for dinner near one of its banks, beneath

to Europeans; and as the inhabitants of all the islands give them the same character, and will not even allow them to land, I suppose it is not without foundation. Whilst we were employed about these islands, the natives were constantly coming on board, and we always found them very docile and passably honest; this was a fortunate occurrence, as they supplied us plentifully with every description of fresh stock and vegetables, which we stood greatly in need of at this time, as the scurvy had appeared in a slight degree amongst the crew.

Whilst the Barracouta remained in this bay, I was dispatched with the pinnace and three days' provision, to track-survey the coast to the northward: the country during the first day was beautifully picturesque, presenting a most pleasing diversity of hill and vale. Towards evening, whilst running along shore, a canoe put off, having on board some bananas and other fruit; but, in consequence of the unfavourable reports concerning these people, and my party being small, I was cautious of holding any correspondence with them; but there being in this instance only one fellow, I was induced to allow him to come alongside with his fruit, and then immediately sent him away. When it was observed from the shore that I allowed this one to approach, numbers instantly put off; but not wishing to be detained if their intention was friendly, or to fight if it was otherwise, I got the boat under weigh before they had come very near.—Whether the natives interpreted this as an act of timidity I know not, but they immediately gave way after us in the most threatening manner, being joined by others from all sides, until they mustered nearly thirty canoes, with five or six men in each, armed with spears and clubs: as they gained upon us rather quickly, we heard an occasional whoop, which left little doubt in the mind of any but that their intention was hostile. I therefore allowed one which was far a-head of the main squadron, and very eager in the pursuit, to come rather close, when I stood up in the boat and fired a pistol over their heads: this stopped their progress for a moment, but, soon recovering the surprise which it occasioned, they beckoned to the others and again commenced the

chase. Having made every preparation for extremities, I next, as they were bearing down upon us with great rapidity fired a musket quite close over them, the sound, of which produced quite a magic effect. There is something very unpleasant, as Byron and many other people say, in the whiz of a ball just by your ear; and these Africans seemed to think so without being indebted to him for the idea, for half of them immediately pulled ashore with as much or more expedition than they had just been pursuing us with, and were very soon followed by the remainder: this was a very great relief to us, and I much applauded the cowardice of these savages, as it prevented the necessity of spilling their blood for our own preservation.

Having thus got rid of these dangerous visitors, we pulled on for some distance, and then anchored for the night about a quarter of a mile off shore. I invariably, when sent from the ship in command of a boat, was particularly cautious not to allow the natives to approach in any numbers, and also at night to lie at a convenient and safe distance from the land. These precautions I would strongly recommend to all young officers employed in this description of service, on a coast where the inhabitants cannot be depended upon. Precaution never is, nor will be mistaken for fear, but will serve rather to recommend an officer in the opinion of a discerning superior. What merit should we have obtained by a rencontre with these ignorant savages through a reckless carelessness, or defiance of their power to injure us? Had we under such circumstances succeeded, by destroying one half of them, in compelling the other to retreat, little glory would have attended the exploit, and much blame, if by moderate caution it could have been avoided. But, on the contrary, if their unsuspected or treacherous attack was successful, the same paper that told the melancholy tale would pass a censure upon the memory of him whose imprudence had led to it. An officer in command has a great responsibility in this situation: he must not forget that it is not his own safety alone, but many valuable lives that are in his keeping: this reflection should deter him from any

rashness or thoughtless contempt of the almost unarmed natives, for numbers will prevail against the most determined and heroic bravery, more especially when surprise is enlisted on the part of the assailants.

I am sorry to say this feeling of contempt was too frequently manifested by many of our young gentlemen, a melancholy instance of which I shall take this opportunity to relate, as it happened on the eastern coast during the early part of our expedition. Whilst off the south-west side of Madagascar, a boat was sent away for the purpose of surveying, under the command of a Mr. Bowie, an old passed midshipman, with a youngster to assist him, named Parsons. Having done some work, and the dinner-hour being near, Mr. Bowie directed the men to pull for a small uninhabited island, about three or four miles from the main (Madagascar,) which he thought would be a pleasant situation for that purpose; and accordingly, as the sea was quite calm, he had the boat's nose run upon the beach.—A spit of sand, extending from a point of this island, was noted for beautiful shells, which induced Mr. Bowie, as soon as the men had dined, to despatch them all for the purpose of collecting, whilst he and his companion remained in the boat, with the intention, it is imagined, of improving their sketch of the forenoon's work—which was our usual practice. The men soon lost sight of the boat behind a foreland, and having arrived at their destination, commenced all sorts of pastimes, not, however, forgetting the intention of their journey, when, having made a plentiful collection, and their time being nearly expired, they set out on their way back; but instead of retracing their steps, a kind of sailor's whim, without a reason, induced them to return by the other side of the island. When they came within sight of the boat, neither of their officers were visible; this did not, however, produce any alarm, as they concluded them to have rambled a short distance into the woods; but, upon coming to the spot, their surmises were quickly changed into dreadful certainty. The first object presented to their sight was Mr. Bowie, lying

at the stern, grasping a musquet in his hand, and pierced by numerous spears that still remained in the bleeding wounds they had made: a pool of yet warm blood told at once the vital sources which had been opened, and left no hope of life. An exclamation of horror burst from all, and their rude mirth was suddenly changed into sounds of grief and lamentation; but they were called from the contemplation of this sad spectacle to another of an equally affecting nature, for, a few yards from the boat, was seen the body of poor Parsons just at the edge of the water, washing slowly on the shore, and then rolling gently back with the receding surf. They instantly drew it on the beach, when the numerous wounds with which his slight frame was covered, gave out their crimsoned tide with doubled violence:

"And, like a wither'd lily, on the land
His slender frame and pallid aspect lay."

The bloody work had been too well done;—they were both dead!

A consultation was held, whether to go in pursuit of the blood-thirsty savages, and take revenge upon them for their murdered officers, or return to the ship and report their melancholy fate? After a little time the latter course was resolved upon, when they laid the cold remains at the bottom of the boat, and rowed in mournful silence and heavy hearts on board. When we saw the bleeding, lifeless bodies of our poor messmates hoisted up the side, every bosom burned for vengeance, and a universal cry was raised to go on shore and annihilate every soul that could be met with, for this inhuman act. But our worthy and prudent captain checked in some measure this feeling for revenge, by representing how certain it was that we must destroy the innocent many with the guilty few: we were, therefore, only left the melancholy satisfaction of mourning over the memory of our friends, who were thus suddenly torn from us, and from those to whom they were even *more* dear.

We were since informed that these murderers, after having

destroyed the two officers, had gone in pursuit of the unarmed crew, with the intention of making them also victims to their cruelty, when they would have returned and plundered the boat; but as a kind Providence ordained it, the before-mentioned whim induced the men to take a different route for their way back, and thus avoid the fate which awaited them. They gained, however, nothing but the blood of their victims, and they probably saw the boat which was to have been their reward, on her way to the ship; nay, it even appeared that ample revenge was taken upon the performers in this tragedy, for, upon the case being made known to Radama, the king, who was very friendly to the English, he vowed that all in the neighbourhood should be put to death, which order we afterwards learned was most strictly obeyed; and, as his reign is quite despotic, it is not at all incredible. The spot where this heart-rending occurrence took place has since been known as *Grave Island*, while the place from which the perpetrators came has received a name in accordance with their nature—*Murderers' Bay*; and they are thus called in our charts.

The length of this digression may, I fear, require some apology,—at least if there be any whose feelings are not interested by the detail. In extenuation, I must confess, that although Madagascar is not likely to be met with in a *Survey of the Western Coast of Africa*, I do yet trust that the kindness of my readers will indulge me in this opportunity to record the untimely death of two young and promising brother officers: they have

> "—— no sculptured urns,
> To mark the spot where earth to earth returns."

I now return to the islands of Corisco, from whence we took our last departure; they are situated at the entrance of the bay, and are very fertile in appearance, and productive in reality. The largest is called Great Corisco, being about three miles long by two and a half broad; at the south end is a populous town, with a very good anchorage a mile and a half

from the shore, in seven fathoms water. There are, however, several patches of rock in the neighbourhood, which, being slightly covered above, and surrounded by very deep water, renders them extremely dangerous, making it requisite for vessels to take every precaution when in their vicinity. The Bay of Corisco is of great extent, being thirty-five miles north and south from Cape St. John to Cape Esteiras, and fifteen from the island to the river Moondah. The surrounding shores of this magnificent harbour are so thickly wooded, that the eye can trace nothing but one continued mass of verdure, while the numerous islands with which it is studded rise from the sea like emeralds, so rich is their green lustre down to the water's edge.

Whilst up the river Gaboon, we heard many reports concerning the treachery of these islanders; but as we did not witness it in a single instance, we were inclined to think more favourably of them. Power certainly is a great protection against violence, and our formidable appearance probably was a better safeguard than the faith of the savages. We found many of these people speak English, and an instance was related to us of their kindness and humanity, which exalted them greatly in our estimation. They informed us that, a few months before our arrival, a Portuguese slaver, or pirate, was lying at anchor in the bay, when an English schooner arrived to trade for ivory, wax, &c. Europeans meeting in this out-of-the-world sort of place, naturally led to inquiries; an occasional visit followed, which soon terminated in intimacy, when the Portuguese took an opportunity of inviting the master and mates of the English vessel to dinner. It is supposed, but no authenticated statement remains, that after plying their unsuspecting guests with wine until they became intoxicated, they basely murdered them in cold-blooded treachery. This done, they went under some pretext on board the schooner, and, waiting for a favourable moment, attacked the unprepared crew, who, having no means of defence, became an easy and almost unresisting prey to their well-armed and blood-

thirsty destroyers. During the short but murderous struggle, one of the boys contrived to jump overboard, and, whilst swimming for the shore, met the vessel's boat coming off with another boy in her: he succeeded after some time in attracting the attention of his shipmate, who instantly picked him up, by which his own life was saved, as, had he gone alongside, the work of butchery would most probably have been ended by taking the life of this poor boy. They instantly pulled with all the strength fear had left them for Great Corisco. The relater of these particulars shewed us a description of the occurrence, which had been written by the master of a trader, who shortly afterwards arrived and took them home. They had both attached their names to this document, which contained many expressions of gratitude for the kindness they had received from the natives. After these Portuguese savages had destroyed the unarmed victims, whom their cowardice led them to fear, they plundered the vessel of every thing valuable, and ran her on the rocks, where part of the wreck still remained in evidence of their guilt. Our cruisers were soon made acquainted with this act of atrocity; but it does not appear that they ever succeeded in taking vengeance upon the assassins; yet it is difficult to imagine that they will ultimately escape the fate which they deserve.

CHAPTER V.

Coast from Corisco Bay. Cape Cameroons. Survey in boats. Deferred hopes of dinner. Reflections on food as a constituent of courage. An original mode of squaring the circle! Disastrous fate of one of the boat's party. Island of Bimbai. Fernando Po. Difficulty of communication with the natives there. Their exclusive fancy in matters of barter. Their ignorant and primitive condition. Survey of the river Andony.

Having beat about the islands of Corisco for some time, we continued our survey to the northward: many canoes came off as we ran along the coast, bringing quantities of fish, fruit, vegetables, &c.; and although we were going about six knots an hour, yet they contrived to keep up with us for a considerable distance. These canoes are not more than twelve feet in length by about two in width, and are built sufficiently light to allow the owners to take them on their backs when no longer required upon the water: the natives are extremely dexterous in their management, and although using but one paddle, propel them with great velocity; when they wish to lessen their speed, they throw a leg out on each side and stop almost immediately. The coast from Corisco bay, during five day's sail, was one continued range of low banks, thickly covered with wood, and only a few small creeks to break off the connexion. It appeared well inhabited; but the villages are so buried amidst the trees, that it is with difficulty they can be discovered.

On the fifth day we arrived off Suellaba, which forms the southern point of the Cameroons, when we immediately despatched the pinnace up the river, to ascertain what ships were

there, and if possible to obtain some fresh provisions. Upon sounding, we found the water very shallow near us, and, on further examination, discovered an extensive reef running out some distance from the point; we were therefore compelled to beat westward in order to avoid it, when we anchored off Cape Cameroons, which forms the northern point of the entrance to the river. From this anchorage we despatched boats to survey. The Bay of Cameroons extends about eight miles north and south, and as many east and west, the greater part of which is shoal water. On the southern entrance is a very extensive reef called the "Dog's-head Shoal," bearing nearly due west point of Suellaba, about two miles and a half off shore, between which, and the shoal extending *from* the point, is a channel of six fathoms; there is also a dry sand-bank bearing north-east of Cape Suellaba, which has a spit of about two miles in length running from it in a westerly direction. The merchant vessels that visit this place anchor about ten miles up the river, off Peter's Town, situated on the left bank. The ebb-tide runs round Point Suellaba with such velocity, that it is quite impossible for the best pulling boat to stem it: this I experienced in a most disagreeable manner upon one occasion. Having been absent the whole of a long morning in a boat without any provisions, I was about returning on board to dinner, when we found the tide had turned; the men, having the same interest with myself, laboured for about three hours to attain the desired object, but could not gain an inch a-head in spite of all their exertions. We were therefore compelled to anchor, and at a distance contemplate the curling smoke as it gracefully rose over the cauldron which was preparing our meal.—Some fancied in their hungry imaginations that they could hear the boatswain's exhilarating pipe, while other quick ears could actually discover the lively clatter of the knives and forks! but I, alas! could distinguish nothing but the grumblings of an empty stomach—

"And long for food, but chiefly a beef-steak;"

which led me gradually into a kind of visionary cogitation, regarding the *connexion between the mental and physical pro-*

perties of Englishmen! Few are aware how much the digestive powers of the mind depend upon those of the body: but that such is the truth let no one doubt; for both ancient and modern writers were so well aware of the fact, that many instances could be mentioned of authors living on a certain diet, whilst writing upon particular subjects. It is not, perhaps, an agreeable theory to suppose that the mind is in any respect dependent upon the stomach for its most lofty and animated productions; yet who can doubt but that a slight morbid action in the alimentary canal would totally disarrange the powers necessary for those productions: therefore, easily digested food is most adapted to the literary *œsophagus*, and the writings of the man who lives by *inhaling* the liver or wings of chickens and sipping dew, will be in a totally different style from those of the swallower of beef, mutton, and *heavy wet*. Again, an Englishman is decidedly a coward when he has an empty stomach; and the set of spiritless-looking wretches that sat before me, during these reflections, confirmed this in my opinion. I am sure one canoe, and a dozen *well-dined* savages, would have overcome them at this moment; there was not a bit of courage amongst them; at other times, there was not a bit of *any thing else;* but it is a well-known fact, that

"*Hunger* makes cowards of us all."

Shakspeare knew nothing about it, and "conscience" would now be backed at any odds against an empty stomach. No good general ever leads an English army to battle without their rations; there would be nothing to resist the bullets and swords of the enemy; every ball and blade would tell, and almost without an effort they would get killed, under the pleasing impression of having *something* in them, even though it were a bayonet: but let him give a pound of beef and a pint of porter to the same men, and the before heartless, dispirited animal would become the irresistible lion that never can be conquered—by any thing but *gastric juice!* When an Englishman is hungry he is cross, crabbed, and disagreeable, afraid of his foes, and regardless of his friends—feed him, and he has no foes,—for he either fairly cuts their throats, or

else they are his friends. I know myself to be in general a very good-tempered fellow; but, when hungry, I am sensible of becoming the most morose and unpolite bear in the world; and as to fighting—there would be more discretion in a good dinner—as Falstaff would have said.

I wound up these reflections by trying to laugh at the simple definition of a young mid of the shortest mode of "squaring the circle," which happened to cross my imagination. He was learning mathematics, and had one day been kept by his master some time after dinner-hour; for which the youngster wished him and his problems snug in "*Davy's locker*." The master was called away for a time, leaving directions for the mid to finish the problem he was about by his return; but instead of doing this, he commenced making one for himself. Upon the master's rather unexpected entry, he found the young gentleman thus occupied, and immediately seized the paper upon which he had been working. It was headed, "An easy and pleasant mode of squaring the circle!" The diagram was four people sitting at a table with a large dish before them, containing a circular joint, which they were resolutely attacking—one of the corners being embellished by the rude figure of a mustard-pot. The proof was thus given: "A, C, D, F, four friends sitting at a dinner table; B, a round of beef; Q, the mustard-pot. A, C, D, F, having each taken a little from Q, apply their knives perpendicularly to B; when if they don't square the circle, they know nothing about mathematics, or are not so hungry as I am." This easy solution of an impossibility so pleased the master, that he sent his impatient pupil to divert himself his own way. I trust the indulgent reader will digest these reflections with as much good-nature as he can: they passed through my mind, when lying at anchor nearly famished with hunger, and seeing the dinner which was cooked for our comfort served up for the eating of others, without the power to do any thing *but think*. Job had nothing like this to try his patience, and I hope no healthy stomach ever will have again. We were doomed

to lie in this distressing situation for nearly six long hours, until the relentless tide had spent its malignant force in opposing our gastronomic inclinations; hunger then lent such stimulus to the oars, that little time elapsed between heaving up the anchor and heaving down the cold ruins which our provident messmates had prepared for us.

On the following day, we had a more melancholy proof of the stream's rapidity at this point. The pinnace had anchored near the same spot, waiting also for the return of the tide; it being low water, some of the crew quitted her to search for shells, when one poor fellow happened to slip from a steep muddy bank: he had just succeeded in recovering himself, when half his body became immersed in the water, and although he appeared to hold firmly by a piece of rock, the force of the tide carried him rapidly away! Every exertion was instantly made to rescue him from his impending fate: all knew the spot abounded with

> "The dire monsters that infest the flood,
> By nature dreadful, and athirst for blood;"

so that not a moment must be lost: he cried for help as the impetuous torrent carried him away. Ropes and oars were thrown towards him: he struggled to reach the offered succour—all was anxiety. His companions cheered as he strongly buffeted to stem the stream—they followed along the bank, trying to assist him—he appeared gaining the shore, and hope began to revive—in a moment the water near him was agitated—an eddying stream was perceived, a slight splash was followed by a piercing cry of agony—then all was still!—he was gone! The stream was shortly after tinged with blood—none asked the other how he died? but they appeared happy to think that he was drowned—but then that cry!—Reader, does not *your* mind gladly turn from contemplating such a death? Or does it picture all the glowing horrors of that moment? Do you in fancy place yourself in the same situation? Suddenly precipitated into the rapid stream, at first you are fearless,—and bravely strike for land; but as your clothes get saturated the effort becomes greater; each

thought is then fixed upon the shore, and you strain every nerve to reach that friendly resting-place. You see your companions on the bank encouraging and trying to direct you; they then throw ropes which fall but little short; another stroke and you are within reach—hope dawns—one yard more and all danger will be over; have you strength enough to make it? At this moment you see the water agitated near you. Your friends urge you in an anxious cry to increase your exertions—the sound of a well-known voice falls upon your ear—but what did it say? It is repeated—at once the idea rushes upon you—a thought so full of horror that Reason almost leaves her seat. Is there no hope? You call upon your companions to save you—'tis vain, the boldest dare not venture—you see them a few yards off anxiously watching, while you are alone—no, not alone, there is something near! that slimy touch!—O God! what is it? You are impelled swiftly through the water—one struggle more, resistance is then passed. The monster turns ere he devours his prey: this rushes on the recollection—the jaws close, and then —— Oh, let us hope that then no more is felt. Another pang like that would make the moment's anguish greater than the torment of a thousand years.

"Are these the parting pangs which nature feels?"

May we consider this as a faint outline of that poor fellow's sufferings? A few minutes before, and he was the most lively amongst his companions—another elapsed, and he was carried away from all assistance by the impetuous stream, and doubtless then felt he must die. Can any imagination conceive the feelings which rushed upon the few short moments of reflection ere the last struggle closed his eyes upon the world for ever? He was a fine young man, and I believe left a wife and child to lament his loss.

We found the pinnace had been unsuccessful in procuring provisions, as she only found one vessel up the river, the crew of which were complaining of short allowance; so, having finished our work in this bay, we again got under weigh,

still continuing to the northward. When we arrived off Bimbia, a small island about five miles from Cape Cameroons, numerous canoes came alongside with goats and other live and dead stock, which met with a ready market at reasonable prices. Many of these canoes had thirty-four rowers, being about sixty-four feet in length, and, I should imagine, the tree from which they were formed could not have been less than twenty-five feet in circumference. The speed with which they propel them through the water is almost incredible, and I should fear hazarding a conjecture of their rate, lest I should be shown up amongst the "Catalogue of ancient and modern Munchausens."

We surveyed the small bay to which this island forms the entrance: it is not above two miles in depth, with very shallow water; but we could pass no judgment on the natives, who appeared very numerous, as we were not allowed to go on shore in consequence of their being reported blood-thirsty and treacherous. The peak of the high land of Cameroons can be seen in clear weather from this anchorage, towering above the rest as if "braving Heaven's highest front." We continued surveying along the coast, which is here very fertile and extremely bold, but, on account of the wind proving unfavourable, were compelled to anchor for two days about a mile and a half off shore. From this spot we obtained a good sight of the "high lands," the extreme point of which we found to be 13,000 feet above the level of the sea. It is reported that the summits of these mountains are sometimes covered with snow; but whether in so warm a region such is the fact, will admit of a doubt, more especially as none has ever been known to fall in the surrounding country: it must therefore rest upon the highest points without continuing its course to the lower earth; which may be accounted for by supposing the upper regions to be sufficiently cold to generate snow, and, upon falling, that it keeps its congealed shape until within a certain distance of the earth, when it dissolves, and falls in the liquid state of rain; but whether this reasoning is correct, I leave the more learned upon such topics to determine.

Finding the wind still continued from the northward, we stood over for the island of Fernando Po, the last tomb opened upon this coast for the immolation of Europeans. In consequence of the weather being extremely hazy, we were prevented seeing this place until within about three miles of the shore, although the land is very high. We were the whole of the afternoon employed beating up to the bay on the north-west side, tacking sometimes within two cables' length of the rocks, where we generally had twenty fathoms water; but, finding we could not make the harbour before dark, we stood out for the night with a light wind, and on the following morning were enabled, as the sea breeze set in, to run into the bay, where we anchored about a quarter of a mile from Goat Island and the shore.

The island of Fernando Po is situated in the Bight of Biaffra, lat. 3° 45′ north, long. 8° 44′ east: it is about forty miles in length by twelve in breadth, with a high peak rising in the centre 10,700 feet above the level of the sea, covered with vegetation nearly to the summit. This peak is visible on a clear day, in coming from the westward, for nearly 100 miles! The island is beautifully picturesque, and about sun-set presents one of the grandest objects it is possible to conceive, as the chasms in the neighbourhood of the peak afford so many splendid and varying colours when the sun is far below our visible horizon; but yet, falling with his dying lustre upon these high pinnacles, every projecting fragment reflects different bright tints, which keep constantly changing as he approaches his ocean bed. It is strange that the most picturesque spots along this coast are in general the most deadly. Sierra Leone is a beautiful grave: this spot again is almost unrivalled for scenery, but the air is contaminated;

> "—— dread pestilence, with her poison'd tongue,
> Lurks in each breeze."

The gale, which you fondly court to cool your burning brow, is the breath of destruction. It has passed over the valley of death, and comes heavy with the cold damp of the charnel-house, to woo you to his court! This island, to appearance,

possesses every thing desirable for a settlement. Nature has been prolific in the extreme; fertility, plenty of water, a commodious harbour, good anchorage, abounding with fish, and a good soil capable of producing any description of vegetation, offer every inducement to the settler, and promise all that he can wish for. But the curse of Africa soon finds out the unthinking victim; and ere he can reap the seed which he has sown, Death, with his unsparing scythe, cuts the slight thread of his existence;

"When seed and sower moulder side by side."

The anchorage at the north end of this island is decidedly the best upon the coast, and Capt. Owen, who went out in H. M. S, Eden in 1827 to form a settlement there, has named it Clarence Cove. The bay abounds with fish and turtle, the former of which are plentiful in the extreme; whales are also very numerous, and I have seen them playing in the harbour as if quite fearless: this is in consequence of their never being molested, as the whalers do not visit them in these seas, although they are in general the "black," which is the most esteemed kind. The sides of the bay are from eighty to one hundred feet high, the summits being covered with wood, which it would in most instances defy the efforts of man to penetrate, although the whole of the landing is good and the beach extremely bold.

Immediately upon our anchoring, we could observe all the canoes quitting the bay with great expedition, apparently in much alarm at our approach; this fear was not unfounded, as it is well known that slavers used formerly to visit this island and carry off numbers of the inhabitants by force; they therefore most probably gave us credit for the same humane intention, although at that time very few vessels ever visited them. We sent a boat in order to see if we could come to any understanding with the natives, so as to induce them to bring us provisions. As we approached the shore, not a soul or the least symptom of humanity was to be seen; but directly we touched the land, a great number of people came out of the

bush where they had been watching our movements, and, I suppose, gained confidence from our orderly and pacific appearance, we having taken the precaution of stowing our arms at the bottom of the boat. We tried all nature's rhetoric to induce them to approach, for a long time in vain, but at length prevailed upon a few to venture on the beach. We had the greatest difficulty to make them comprehend our wishes; for it soon appeared quite evident that either *they* or *we* were great fools, and knew nothing about the language of nature, for our signs to express particular things did not coincide at all with their ideas upon the same subject; *par exemple*, when I thrust my finger down my throat almost far enough to produce disagreeable consequences, they brought me some water in a cocoanut shell, as if amongst them *fluids only* went that way. I then, by putting the *masseter muscles* in operation, tried to convey the idea of *eating* more forcibly, which they replied to by grinning in the most awful manner, to convince me, I imagine, that they had teeth as well as myself; and in every other instance we found them as provokingly dull. Having performed antics and gestures enough to embellish any horse-collar, we returned about as wise as those we had left on board. In fact, I may say, the sum total of our information was, as above mentioned, that what they drank went down their throats, that they had uncommonly good teeth, and a great taste or fancy for pieces of iron hoop, but would not give a yam for a whole chain cable, links of which they would not accept when offered!

On the following day we sent some boats to procure water; and, to guard against any "untoward event," sent others armed to protect them: as they approached, the landing became covered with natives, all roaring, bellowing, and screeching in such various discordant tones, that the woods and hills reechoed with sounds of *devilry*. I should imagine not less than 700 had mustered, either to try and borrow our scalps, or meet us on friendly terms; *which* remained a matter of doubt for some time. As the watering boats advanced, the escort

kept a short distance back, under the word "make ready:" however, immediately they touched the shore, these miserable wretches commenced offering yams, of which they gave a large bundle for a small piece of iron hoop: they appeared to value nothing else, and would give all their *goods and chattels* for two or three inches: this might not always prove a good bargain to the purchaser, as the "real and personal" of these people is seldom more than a *natural estate*. They convert this piece of hoop into ornaments for their dismal-looking bodies, and God knows few require them more: they grind it into some shape, and then set the splendid *bijou* in a band of plaited straw, which they fasten round the upper part of the left arm. We found it almost impossible to procure water without being very unpolite to the natives, as the party with the casks were so pestered by their officious kindness: the following slight *ruse* was accordingly had recourse to. One of the boats was sent a short distance from the watering-place holding up pieces of hoop, at which the flock immediately followed, leaving the party to help themselves; at the same time the other boats were obtaining a plentiful supply of yams, which at this place are particularly fine. This manœuvre enabled the people to obtain the water in some degree of peace, as the natives greedily took the bait, and kept with the boats while a piece of hoop remained.

Having obtained the necessary supply, upon leaving we made use of every device to persuade some of them to return to the ship, but without success, as not one could be prevailed upon. We had not, however, been long on board before we saw a single canoe coming off, and shortly afterwards it came alongside with three people in her: we held a kind of *palaver* for some time, trying to persuade them to come on deck; but all our eloquence had nearly proved ineffectual, when the display of a piece of hoop, about six inches long, induced one of these avaricious *niggers* to put his sweet person in jeopardy for its acquirement. The fellow came on board as if he were going to be hanged, and when he stood upon the deck

looked almost *white* with fear: every limb was performing its own particular movement, while his jaws were rattling a most nervous accompaniment. It caused considerable amusement to our tars to see the courageous bearing of this valorous savage: one of them, who did not believe in fear, swore it was "from *cold* (the thermometer at 110!) that he *shivered his timbers*;" and, to convince his messmates, shoved a glass of rum down his noways reluctant throat.—This experiment appeared in some degree to corroborate Jack's opinion, for the native immediately showed signs of returning animation, and soon became quite domesticated. The daring heroism of this gentleman was hailed by his fellow-countrymen as a most courageous exploit, and we had no occasion afterwards to request their company, the introduction was so gratifying to all; so that canoes were constantly alongside, offering every thing they had in the world for a bit of iron. The captain sent a few hoops on shore to be distributed amongst the chiefs, by way of encouragement for them to traffic with any other vessels that might come after us.

The natives of this island well merit a description, as they far surpassed any we had seen in the course of our voyage. We found them in the most rude, uncivilised state it is possible to imagine, having every requisite accomplishment to entitle them to the name of "savage" in its most comprehensive sense in fact, most of the inhabitants of the continent were *gentlemen* of courtly manners and appearance, compared with these unwashed islanders, and I only waited until some of our party should be roasted, to set them down as the primitive *anthropophagi* of the earth! but fortunately none of them underwent that agreeable process to confirm me in my opinion. These unsophisticated "children of the woods" are in general tall, and sometimes well-made, but Nature has not been at all particular in their construction; she appears to have made them under the impression that they were *not likely to be seen*; and the place they are *stuck* in, bears out this supposition. Many a long-legged fellow is seen in possession of a

pair of arms that were evidently intended for somebody else; whilst divers great heads have deposited themselves, without the consent or knowledge of the proprietor, upon the little bodies which they are *intended* to adorn. Unquestionably art has done nothing for them, and Nature appears to have done less; or, if they are indebted to her for their construction, she must have used the *scrapings* of mortality for the purpose, as they are devoid of the virtues of a savage life, or the vices of a civilised one; in fact, the impression always upon my mind was, that they had *made themselves*; as life is generated by fermentation, so they had gradually risen from a pool of mud, and without the process of ablution, taken themselves up and walked, *very proper men*! Their wardrobes are born with them; the only addition they afterwards make is a small bunch of leaves tied loosely round their waists with a piece of straw; they also form bands, which they fasten round their arms and legs, composed of the apex of small shells; and when they have acquired possession of a piece of hoop, and formed it into a kind of oyster-knife, it is worn constantly stuck in a kind of sheath upon the left arm; and as they are continually being upset from their canoes, they very sagaciously fix it in a piece of wood sufficiently buoyant to prevent it from sinking. I feel pleasure in recording this latter instance of *Fernandoponian* intelligence, and regret it is not in my power to recollect the farther proceedings of their "Society of Arts." They have an idea of hats, but I believe are more indebted to the burning sun for this invention than to the mass of stuff it is intended to cover. These said hats or mats are composed of divers loose bits of straw laid one above the other like a small stack or thatched roof (a very correct simile,) all secured to the head by a *wooden skewer*, which goes in at one side, passes quite through the hair, and makes its appearance again at the other.—This, whatever it can be called, is adorned with various ornaments, such as shells, jawbones of animals, and *goat's horns*, which last are stuck up as if on the head of the *original* brute: this ornament offended the sight of our *Benedicts* excessively. But, to wind up the description of these

"brothers and natural relations!" as the *saints* call them; (thank Heaven, if my glass does not deceive me, I need not acknowledge the relationship; and, in my opinion, it does little credit to those Misters who are constantly boasting of the connexion; but probably they think all who see them must discover it, and that it is better to be

"An acknowledged piebald than a dapple grey—"

these well-bred people whom I am describing have a kind of coment greatly surpassing any thing of *Truefits*, which they plaster all over their bodies and head. It is composed of red ochre and palm oil; I regret extremely not recollecting the exact proportions; this they use most abundantly, each lock of their never-cut hair being clotted into great masses by this "*pommade divine*," in consequence of which they can be *smelt* "*afar off*," it being almost impossible to exist in their immediate neighbourhood. They make use of this stuff in order to protect their delicate *hides* from the scorching effects of the sun, which it is supposed would otherwise destroy their complexions, particularly the *ladies*.' We found them very much disposed to plunder whenever a fair opportunity offered, and I have no doubt they would as readily add *braining* under the same circumstances. An instance of their propensity for acquiring *knowledge &c.* was very soon given us.—One of the party was very busy passing the water, when he was suddenly surrounded by a gang of the natives pestering him with questions, none of which he wished to, or could understand; so Jack contented contented himself by heartily *damning* them in good plain English, to which they paid great attention, and appeared much edified. In a moment afterwards he missed the bayonet from his side; he caught hold of a couple near him, but neither of them was in possession of the stolen article, or, like "*Ramo Samee*," they must have swallowed it, as no place for deception was about their persons. The fact was, the fellow who had done it had made off with as much dexterity as any "*London pride*"* could have displayed; and the sailor was obliged to content himself by

* Pickpocket.

knocking his two friends' heads together, and then letting them depart: this bayonet was never recovered, although every exertion was made for that purpose. But I must also record an instance which redounded much to their credit. Another of the party was surrounded by the natives in a similar manner, when, after their annoying him with questions for some time, he saw one of them running off with his cutlass, which he had gently extracted from the sheath without the owner being at all sensible of the operation. He instantly gave chase after the thief, who scudded towards the woods at the rate of about twelve knots an hour. Jack would have had a very poor chance of recovering his lost property, had it depended upon his own exertions, as the fellow had gained the wood before Jack had got well under weigh; but one of the chiefs, seeing our man in pursuit, immediately despatched a party to secure the culprit. This duty they performed in a very smart manner, and returned in a very few minutes, bringing the felon with the cutlass still in his hand. Having the stolen goods upon his person, he was sentenced on the spot; and I afterwards learnt their punishment for offences of this nature was, taking from the offender every thing he possessed, and turning him loose into the woods. Another of their inflictions is of a most cruel description, and very frequently resorted to for any capital crime. I am not exactly aware what they consider in that light; but as we saw many who bore the marks of punishment, I am led to believe the catalogue is rather long. This consists in cutting off the hands of the delinquent a little above the wrist, after which mutilation the poor devil is allowed to get through the world as he can, which, upon consideration, must be no easy matter to a rude savage, without one spark of ingenuity to supersede their use. I was much surprised upon one occasion at the very strange mode of paddling adopted in a canoe, and it was not until it came along side that I discovered she was rowed by four of these unfortunate culprits, who, having no hands, actually held the oar by crossing their stumps, and from practice contrived to propel the canoe with considerable velocity.

Whilst at this island, I was one day sitting after dinner in the gun-room, when a native, who had acquired a little English, came and paid me a visit. This man was possessed of quite superior intelligence, and, by comparison with his fellow countrymen, deserved a monument in the national mausoleum of Fernando Po; his general look was grave and sagacious, and his *grin* quite sublime. I tried to astonish this sable Xenophon by various simple contrivances, such as roaring to him through a speaking-trumpet, sounding a flute, showing him his elegant portrait in a looking-glass, with many other attempts, but without producing any effect upon his unchanged countenance; at length I placed myself in a chair, having, unperceived, set a musical snuff-box on the opposite side of the table. When it commenced playing, he stared about him as if puzzled to know from whence the sound came, his eyes looking like those of a person recovering from apparent death. I took no notice, but sat watching these natural expressions of surprise: he next approached, and placed his ear against my shoulder, as if he thought the sound came from me, and then looked steadfastly in my face as if expecting an explanation. As I did not reply in any way to this, he commenced another scrutiny, and presently caught sight of the box which had been hidden from him by a bottle: he stepped eagerly towards it, applying first his ear, and then touching it gently with his hand, as a man would an animal that he never saw before; in doing this he pressed the stop, and it ceased! The look and action of astonishment which followed, it is impossible to describe: he instantly drew his hands away, as if in fear, and stood for a few minutes staring first at me and then at the box. I could have held out no longer, his appearance was so highly ludicrous, when just as my risibility was overcoming my gravity, he drew his mouth and other features together in the most extraordinary manner —a perfect concentration of wonder,—and saying, with deep emphasis, "you *ve'y* big man!" stalked deliberately out, casting behind him an occasional look of amazement at me and my box! This fellow ever afterwards viewed me with an eye of superstitious awe.

Having completed our supply of water, and obtained a large quantity of yams and other stock, we got under weigh towards the mouth of a small river called Andony, on the main, where we again anchored about two miles off shore, in four fathoms and a half. The deepest water we found whilst standing across was fifty fathoms, and that a few miles from Fernando Po: we sent the pinnace up the river immediately, which, not being very extensive, she soon explored, and in about two hours attempted to rejoin the ship, but found the breakers on the bar had become so tremendous that it was quite impossible to get over; she was therefore compelled to remain at anchor in the river for the night, and the following morning contrived to get on board in time for breakfast.

CHAPTER VI.

Continued course northward. Destructive visits of the African rats. Their habits and peculiarities. Annoyance from cockroaches. State of affairs in the midshipman's berth. River Bonny. Intricate entrance to it. King Pebble of Bonny. The palm-oil trade. Intense action of the sun in Africa. Ground-sharks. Singular respect shown to them by the natives of Bonny. Festival of the Javjav. Judicial ordeal of exposure to the sharks. Privileges enjoyed by the lizards. A serious occurrence produced by the destruction of one of these reptiles.

Upon the return of the pinnace from surveying the river Andony, we weighed and commenced beating up the coast to the northward, standing out during the night, and continuing our work along shore with the morning's light. We were employed during one day in clearing the sail-room, where we found great havoc had been made by the rats, who had formed a most populous and destructive establishment on board; nothing that admitted of mastication, without any consideration of its digestive properties, could be preserved from these rapacious animals; in fact their prowess deserves particular mention.

The rat of Africa (*mus giganteus*) is not like the well fed, and, in spite of its bad character, well-shaped native of our "Golden Isle," being in general much larger and particularly hideous, as it varies considerably in form, the head being if any thing more capacious than the body, with a very thick and elevated skull. I was frequently led to believe that these animals had been made *upside down*, and thus had their brains

put in the body, and their intestines in the head; but whether anatomists could admit such a position, I must leave *them* to determine; certain it is, that the seat of intellect is by far the better calculated to contain the quantities of miscellaneous matter which they devour, than the usual depository for such matters. They are well whiskered and long-tailed, and generally known amongst our sailors by the classical cognomen of *Bandicote*, the derivation of which is to me a mystery. None can imagine, who have not witnessed it, the destructive character of these rats; the wooden walls of Old England are hardly safe when once attacked by them; as, when hard run, they would as soon devour a *seventy-four* as any *other vessel.* The chaincables and guns were the only things positively untouched by their rapacious maws: shoes, jackets, caps, shirts, stockings—in fact, a mid's whole wardrobe was but a meal for them; and the young gentleman himself would have been taken as dessert with as much ease, if they could have mustered courage enough to make a beginning. Whittington's cat would, in my opinion, have undergone the process of digestion in the stomach of a Bandicote, ere she arrived at the immortality which now attends her name. As an instance of this, I had secured a couple of very fine grey parrots, and thought I had taken every precaution to guard them from the attacks of these rats; they were suspended in a stout wooden cage from the deck by a strong cord, in the same cabin with myself. I had succeeded in preserving them for a few days, and began to hope that they would be spared from the ravenous harpies, when one night I was alarmed by a noise near me, which I soon recognised as the fall of the cage, and was instantly confirmed in it by a tremendous disturbance upon the floor, and the vociferous exclamations of the *Pollies.* I started out in the dark, and all was immediately silent. I soon found the cage, and, in hopes that the rescue was complete, again suspended it, and returned to roost. Upon waking at day-light, my grief was lost in astonishment to see the cage still hanging without any inhabitants; not the ghost of a parrot was there! Upon a farther inquiry, I found that the

wretches had not only gnawed through the rope, but also destroyed two of the bars, and thus got in, and turned out their prey, which they instantly dismembered, and devoured at their leisure in various parts of the ship; the only remains I could find were the beaks and feathers, to remind me of my beautiful birds. War to the knife was declared against these destructive monsters, but, in spite of every exertion, they appeared to increase tenfold for every one that was destroyed. No mercy was ever shown them, and numbers were sacrificed to the *manes* of my poor parrots.—But to record the numerous acts of daring and ferocity displayed by these devourers would fill a volume; nothing daunted them, and the dreadful example of slaughtered hundreds appeared but to stimulate the living thousands to fresh exertions. Another pest to which we were subject, was that well-known and little-respected gormandizer the cock-roach (*Blatta Africana*,) whose powers of stomach and annoyance are familiar to most oriental travellers. In my opinion, the locusts of Egypt were not for one moment to be compared with these active and never satisfied destroyers; and I firmly believe the most certain way to rid the land of the former, would have been to turn in half the quantity of the latter, when, if they did not eat every locust and *every thing else*, the cock-roach of the ancients could not be compared to the ditto of the moderns. These animals, to speak phrenologically,* are possessed of but two organs, viz. *destructiveness* and *philogenitiveness;* under the latter they increase and multiply with never-ceasing rapidity; in addition to which, they never die *but when they are killed;* or, if such an event should happen to one of them from indigestion, or some other natural cause, his neighbour, although just born, will eat him before his face. These things were the constant companions of our bed and board, and on more than one occa-

* That is to say, according to a theory of long words and short senses, which is likely to be of much service to society, as an Ordnance survey is to be taken of the heads of all his Majesty's subjects, when some striking mark will be put upon those who possess the organ "*acquisitiveness*" to an extent likely to endanger the property of their neighbours, Mr. De Ville, of the Strand, is authorised to sell the private topography of individuals for the formation of *matrimonial*, *friendly*, or servile alliances.

sion I have been awakened by half-a-dozen of them nibbling at my toe and finger-nails, making the use of scissors quite unnecessary. They would not be disturbed until, happening to get below the quick, they have commenced upon the flesh, which sometimes cost them a few lives.

Every well-informed person knows the *light, airy,* and *salubrious* situation of the midshipman's berth in a small ship: let them see it in all its grandeur, when just fitted out in port, and it offers much for admiration; but oh! "what a change is here!" In this place, youngsters of four, five, and six feet, are to *flourish;* and this *marine cellar has* produced heroes, but seldom *great* men; for the rising youth has two chances against his ever attaining a full and straight growth. First, if nature meant him for a tall man, the *art* of ship-building won't allow it, if he be sent early to sea: secondly, if he commences his career when his head is level with the beams, he has the pleasing alternative of perpetually demonstrating the force of contact, or submitting by a constant inclination of the head to a constant elevation of the shoulders, vulgarly called a hump. But I must leave others to prove what are the consequences of putting young gentlemen intended at their birth to attain the height of six feet, to live in a place not more than five feet and a few inches. In our ship, whilst on the coast of Africa, this seminary for *young Glories* possessed all the merits of a steam-boiler, and was kept in constant illumination by means of some cocoa-nut oil burning in a mustard-pot. As, from the present naval arrangements, it would be imagined that midshipmen cannot be well reared by the light of the sun, they are accordingly raised, like winter melons, in a frame of small dimensions, by the united efforts of *hot air* and *darkness.* The consequence of this light-exclusive principle was frequently very disagreeable to our young gentlemen, as they used to complain that whenever they indulged in soup, they universally found such a promiscuous medley, that their digestive organs were frequently much disturbed; and a memorial was sent to congress, setting forth, "That on a certain

day and hour, then and there mentioned, the members of the *mess below* were luxuriating upon a well-known and much-liked delicacy, yclept plum-pudding, when it suddenly occurred to one of the *masticators* that the above pudding had a very peculiar flavour; that this *conjecturer* hereupon entered into an investigation, by bringing the rays of the mustard-pot to bear upon the broken plate, on which were deposited the remains of the suspected *morceau*, when, upon an accurate scrutiny, and much to the horror of the examiners, it appeared that the component part were plums, *and* the legs, heads, and other members of cock-roaches; but plums were considerably in the minority, and the 'cock-roaches had it.'" Upon further inquiry, it also appeared, that the suttle formerly used to contain the cockpit confectionary was entirely filled by the above mentioned voracious reptiles, who had then and there demolished the whole of the grocery to wit, and then voluntarily yielded up themselves as substitutes for making tea, soup, puddings, &c. &c.; and the silent conviction on the minds of all was, that they had been indulging for some time past upon plum-puddings made of cock-roaches, which had given them the *rich* look and flavour which had in this abode of darkness been so much admired.

"Where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise."

I shall conclude my notice of these our messmates by mentioning a few anecdotes in illustration of their powers. I had secured two or three very fine hippopotamus's teeth, and, thinking them quite safe, merely left them behind a trunk; but judge my surprise when, upon nearing England, I brought them forth mere tooth-picks compared with what they were! These cock-roaches had been to work upon some *ban-yan* day, and actually eaten about half an inch all round of the solid ivory, which is, I believe, the hardest in existence; how they contrived to make any impression is to me the most unaccountable; and, in fact, so are most of the ways of cockroaches.

The addition of these and the rats became at length too much for us, and orders were issued for the boys to muster every morning, with a certain number of both these pests in their custody, under severe pains and penalties, which made them in the course of time most admirable mousers; and one young urchin in particular I would have backed to kill his hundred *rats* against any *Billy* in *Westminster*. But it is time to return to the sail-room, where we found they had been making sad havoc, breakfasting off a flying-gib, dining off a main-sail, and finishing the day's meal with a sky-scraper!

We were several days beating up to River Bonny in consequence of the wind being unfavourable, but at length gained Rough Corner, which forms the eastern entrance, when we despatched the pinnace up the river in search of provisions, and a boat to Breaker's Island to obtain a base-line. Upon her arrival we fired two guns, by which we found our distance to be six miles from the island. The boat, upon her return, reported having observed sixteen sail of vessels lying up the river off the town, which information gave us hopes of obtaining some provisions; a French brig was also perceived lying at the entrance of the Calabar river. We were employed for two or three days surveying the bar at the mouth of this river, and the numerous shoals in the bay; during which time the pinnace was absent, and began to be looked for with some degree of anxiety, when, one afternoon, we saw her pulling out of the river towing a *lump** at her stern, which gave us most pleasing anticipations of fresh provisions; but they were doomed not to be realised on that day, for, before she could get out, the flood-tide set in and compelled her to anchor for the night. On the following morning, we made sail over the bar to meet her; and when she came alongside, we found she had been very successful in her foraging, having procured stock for nearly three weeks. They informed us that the principal part of this provender had been obtained from the King of Bonny, and but a small quantity from the English vessels, as

* A provision-boat.

they were complaining of short commons. This sable despot's name is Pebble, and he styles himself King Pebble, of Bonny, Conqueror of Calabar, and a great many other places not particularly well known to European readers; all of which he winds up with a long list of most illustrious titles, which I could not precisely understand, and therefore contented myself without a full sense of his dignities. He is reported as being amazingly rich, and actually in possession of more than a million and a half of dollars, with vast warehouses full of different wines and merchandize. This wealth has been acquired from the masters of vessels, who are obliged to make him a valuable present before permission is granted to commence trading. The entrance to the river Bonny is extremely intricate, and I should recommend all ships to receive a native pilot before they attempt it. These fellows are provided by the king for that purpose, and, upon application to his Majesty, one is instantly sent, without any charge being made, although it is customary, if he performs his duty well, to make him some trifling remuneration; but this is not always the case, as, from ignorance or idleness, accidents frequently happen to vessels whilst under their guidance,—to prevent which, the French traders that visit this port invariably keep a pair of pistols on deck, and tell the pilot that should any thing happen whilst he is on board, they will instantly blow out his brains,—not a very pleasant, but at the same time a very certain way, to put a man to his *wit's end.* This threat is in general, however, so stimulating, that, whether the fellows have abilities or not, they universally work the French ships in safety.

The chief produce of this place is palm-oil, which must be very plentiful, as from fifteen to twenty ships, of five or six hundred tons are loaded annually with this article in the river Bonny alone. The principal trade is carried on by a Mr. Tobin of Liverpool, who appears to enjoy quite a monopoly; and, to judge from the small cost at which it is obtained in Africa, and the high value it holds in England, the profits must be con-

siderable. This traffic is, however, attended with much danger to the immediate actors; and great difficulty is experienced in obtaining seamen for the ships, as it frequently happens that few of the original crew return from that fatal coast, where they sometimes lie for two or three years before they complete their cargo, and during this period the whole ship's company not unfrequently become victims to the pestilential climate. This it is that prevents sailors of good character and abilities from entering into the service; and report says, that it is no uncommon event for the ship's crew to be completed a night previously to her sailing, by means that reflect but little credit upon those concerned. In fact, it is currently stated, that many of the men arrive on board in a state of intoxication, and, with returning reason, find themselves under weigh for the coast of Africa. Ivory is another article exported in large quantities from the river Bonny; and ere Britannia had broken the shackles of the slave, whilst her blood-stained flag waved over the miserable victims of her sons' cupidity, this place was their customary mart of human flesh and bondage. Even now, the neighbouring nations of Europe, the Portuguese and Spaniards, continue this disgraceful and inhuman traffic.

The method of commencing trade in this river is rather amusing, and perhaps deserves notice. When a ship arrives, let her object be what it may, ivory, palm-oil, or slaves, all have to undergo the same ceremony. Before a single act of barter is allowed, a *dash*, as it is termed, must be made to the king, which, being interpreted, means a handsome present. This takes place with all the pomp imaginable; a few days after the vessel's arrival, his sable Majesty is invited on board to a *dejune a la fourchette*, when all the masters of the different ships are mustered to meet him. He then embarks in a large canoe, rowed by about thirty paddles, while he sits, with all the pomp and dignity of the *King of Bonny*, on a kind of rude throne or chair, rigged up in the after part, and dressed in his robes of state. Upon his arrival on board, he is

received in due form, and handed to the breakfast table by the Captain. Immediately he is seated, he falls to and eats like any other hog, until his powers of receiving, but not his inclination, are exhausted: when this effect is produced, the dash is brought forward, and spread out for his inspection. It generally consists of various articles, such as muskets, casks of powder, beads, bushels of salt, and stuffs of divers descriptions; if the intended offering meets with his approbation, he gives a grunt to that effect, when the goods are handed into his boat. He then takes a parting glass or two, before embarking his own fair form, from the effects of which he is generally slung in a rope and lowered to the canoe, where,

"The world forgetting, by the world forgot,"

he is rowed ashore to wallow in the mire of which nature made him. Immediately after this interesting ceremony, trade is allowed to commence, and the coopers from the palm-oil ships may then go on shore and set up their casks, which are put into the trading canoes and taken many miles up the country; they frequently return in the course of a week, with two or three puncheons, which they procure for articles similar to those mentioned above; and I will venture to say, that each cask does not cost more than two pounds in that country, which in England sells for ten times as much; 8 or 10,000 tons are thus annually sent from this place to Liverpool, Bristol, and other British ports; no other country but our own, ever taking a cargo, as they in general prefer *black* ivory. The country surrounding this town is low, and swampy, and at that season of the year (March) particularly unhealthy. The merchant vessels were losing many men daily, although every precaution was taken to prevent disease.—They were nearly all covered in, and the men not allowed to go on shore, or work in the sun, which is the chief enemy to the constitution in this climate. Man, in these torrid regions, is not the first person singular; he is subject *to* and governed *by* the sun, every action is dependent upon that hot luminary, and every intention expressed, should properly terminate with, "if the sun will let me;" it acts not only upon the body

but upon the mind its influence is also great, and none who have not experienced it, can imagine the pleasure of seeing the sun, after its burning maddening course, sink into the cool bed of the ocean, acting upon the mind as the plunge into a cold bath, when in a high state of fever, does upon the body. It used to be a saying in Portugal, and I believe in many other hot places, "that none but dogs and Englishmen went out in the sun.' The burning rays in Africa are possessed of so much power, that braving them in the mid-day, may, with great propriety, be considered as tying the first knot of a strait-waistcoat; and if a *coup de soleil* does not quickly deprive you of reason enough to know any thing about it, you will soon discover that a second walk in the sun-shine may save you the necessity of looking after your own affairs, and trouble your next of kin to take charge of your body and estate, under the conviction that your mind is removed *ex officio*. All nature seems in these caloric regions to feel and look parched and feverish; and I firmly believe, that every cat, dog, mouse, tree, shrub, and butterfly, in fact, every member of the animal and vegetable kingdom, looks with as much pleasure upon the daily decease of this hot luminary, as it hails with delight the cool refreshing dews of night, and the cold comfortable-looking moon, shining with its round unmeaning face upon the thirsty earth. An Englishman cannot understand a tropical sun; the dog-days of our temperate isle, would be refreshing moments to the toasting, stewing, enervating hours of an African purgatory; frequently no breath of air sweeps over the waters to cool your parched skin, or else it comes like "blasts from hell," and you inhale air that almost burns the lungs, so hot and arid is it With night come the tempting but too fatal dews, and a refreshing breeze:

"The morrow comes when they are not for thee!"

This river abounds with ground-sharks of a prodigious size and, from the respect whichis paid them by the natives, they are quite domesticated. This, however much it may be admired in some animals, is not at all a pleasing trait in the

character of a shark, and the domestic monster of this species is quite as disagreeable in his mode of mastication, as his less polished brother of the deep; but probably I shall be better understood by saying, that from having proper respect and attention paid to them, they are quite fearless, and seem to eat you under the impression that *men were made for sharks.* The inhabitants of Bonny worship this very sagacious and agreeable monster, which they call their *Jewjew*, and seem to consider that the nearest way to heaven, is through the digestive organs of a ground-shark. In consequence of this devotion paid to the shark, it is considered a great crime to kill them, for they say, "Who kill Jewjew, him go dam, but who Jewjew eat, him go *com'artable*;" an odd idea of comfort, but *chacun a son gout*, as our polite neighbours say. These animals appear so well aware of their prerogative of protection, that they commit the most daring acts, and have been known to leap some feet out of the water to get hold of men whilst working in the head of the vessel, thinking no doubt, that they were fit subjects to be "*made comfortable*," as they had just undergone the process of ablution. Falling overboard is certain destruction, as they keep a constant watch upon all vessels lying in the harbour.

The inhabitants hold a kind of festival three or four times a year, which they call "Javjav." It is conducted by taking all their canoes into the middle of the river, when, after numerous ceremonies and absurdities to invoke the patronage and protection of their attentive listeners, they commence throwing them quantities of goats, fowls, goms, &c. until every monster that happens to be in the neighbourhood, appears satisfied; on which they return to the shore with loud rejoicings. In return for this kindness, the Jewjew gives a protection purely Irish;* for, the first native that any one can get hold of he prevents any *other* from attacking, by eating him himself. Would that this were the only rite they pay to these

* *Vide* Sir Jonah Barrington's description of a gentleman in Ireland, who was called "the peace maker," because he would never let any body fight but himself.

voracious monsters! Humanity is not so much shocked by the almost self-sacrifice of ignorance and superstition, but when innocence becomes a victim, compassion shudders at that which she cannot prevent. Every year a guiltless child is doomed to expiate with its life, the follies and crimes of its destroyers. The poor babe is named for this bloody rite at its birth from which time it is called their Jewjew, and allowed every indulgence that its infant fancy can wish for, until it arrives at about nine or ten years of age, when its sanguinary doom must be fulfilled. The tears and lamentations of the child avail not; its parents have placed their feelings of nature on the altar of a mistaken devotion; it is therefore left alone to plead with those who hope to benefit by its destruction. The sharks collect as if in expectation of the dainty meal being prepared for them. The spot chosen is a spit of sand, into which a stake is driven at low-water mark.—The mother sees her innocent offspring bound to this, and, as the tide advances left alone. Various noises are made to drown the cries of the terrified child. Its little hands are seen imploring, and its lips calling for her aid; the water soon reaches the stake, and the greedy monsters are seen by the tender victim quickly approaching with the deepening tide. Have we fellow-creatures like these? is there a mother that can stand and see this unconcerned? Can her heart be formed like ours? has not the withering bolt of heaven seared up their feelings, and left them a debased and hardened imitation of humanity? I need but briefly finish the horrible picture. The shouting mob stand watching the stake until the advancing tide has emboldened the sharks to approach their prey—then their dreadful revelry begins. No tear is shed for the poor sufferer, but the day is concluded with rejoicing and festivities.

It will be seen from this, and the following fact, that these animals, which in general are looked upon with a feeling of terror and disgust, are here held in much estimation and importance. In their punishments they ever make them their

judges, (more properly executioners) in case of any atrocity being committed. The person upon whom suspicion falls is ordered by the king to swim across the river, when, if innocent, he is to arrive safe upon the other side; but if otherwise, these just judges are to have him for breakfast. This trial takes place before his majesty and an immense concourse of spectators: the suspected person is brought forth and forced into the river, when the poor devil makes every exertion to reach the destined goal, but strange to say, the king has never yet left the beach without being fully convinced of the truth of his suspicions, as no instance is on record of the sharks ever allowing him to be in the wrong. This is certainly very like hanging first and trying afterwards. These people have a great deal of trade and constant intercourse with Europeans, yet we found them in many things as debased as any savages upon the coast; and these bloody ceremonies, which they perform to the present day, corroborate this statement.

Another object of their devotion is the guana, a species of lizard, which is one of the most privileged members of society, and allowed to do whatever it pleases with impunity. It is a most filthy and disgusting reptile, which, in this unaccountable country may be a reason for the attention which is paid it. The length to which this is carried is beyond conception; and I have on several occasions,scen it enter a house and deliberately carry off fowls and ducks which were intended for immediate consumption, and this without being in any way molested by the proprietor, who, on the contrary, seemed to consider himself honoured by the preference which this object of his devotion had given him.

An occurrence also took place whilst we were here, which had nearly proved of a serious nature to the traders. It was in consequence of a mate of one of the vessels having killed one of the guanas, in ignorance of its value. Immediately King Pebble and the whole nation were on the *qui vive*,

vowing vengeance against the aggressor, at the same time that a mandate was issued for the instant suspension of all trade. Every canoe coming down the river with oil and other merchandize was stopped, and a guard put on board to prevent her delivering the cargo. In fact, a perfect stagnation took place, not a single native attempting to come on board any ship for any purpose whatever: this state of things lasted for some days, but was at last compromised by presenting a *dash* to the King, adequate to the dreadful offence which had been committed!

CHAPTER VII.

Cape Formosa. A rejected offer. Shoals near the river Waree. Entrance of the Benin. Amusement on shore.—Maccaw, the sable sovereign of Boobie. Free offers of slaves. Sketch of the career of a slave. Origin and first intention of the African slave traffic. Condition of the slave in the West Indies as compared with that of the wild African. King Maccaw's notions of roguery and other matters. A supply of provisions. Inquiries respecting Captain Clapperton. A night's soaking. Sudden change of weather and dangerous situation of the Barracouta's boat. Renewal of acquaintance with the king of Boobie. His hospitable behaviour.

HAVING completed our survey of the river Bonny, and obtained what fresh provisions the place afforded, we made sail off the coast, and then continued our course to the northward; but too far from the shore to be enabled to form any opinion of its character. On the following day, towards evening, we made Cape Formosa, (or handsome,) where we came to an anchor, about seven miles from the land. This Cape is situated in latitude 4° 19′ 24″ north, and long. 5° 54′ 33″ east, and forms a fine bold headland. We despatched two boats early the following morning to measure a base-line, and make some necessary observations; immediately after which, a canoe arrived on board, with about half a dozen natives, who stated that they came from a river called Sangany, near Cape Formosa, and as if but one interpretation could be put upon people with white faces paying them a visit, they commenced without hesitation offering slaves for sale, and informed us that they had a great many on hand in very good

condition; when given to understand that we were not come for that purpose, they could not at all conceive what our object could be; and, as no body took the trouble to explain, they left us in silent astonishment at our not having a taste for "stout niggers."

Upon the return of the boats, we again got under weigh towards the river Benin, keeping as close in, as the very shoal water along this part of the coast would allow; sufficiently near, however, to enable us to perceive many small rivers, that here emptied themselves into the sea. At sun-set we came-to in four and a half fathoms, about four miles from the land, and continued in this way for some time, running along shore during the day, and standing out at sun-set. The coast appeared low and swampy, without any signs of inhabitants. When near the Waree, a river of some magnitude, we were obliged to tack, (in order to avoid the dangerous shoals that extend some distance from its mouth,) and shortly afterwards made the southern entrance to the Benin, where we anchored in five fathoms water.

On the following morning we again weighed and stood towards the river, but a strong wind, getting up from the south-east, obliged us to take in all sail, and run before it. This was one of the younger branches of the Tornado family, beginning quite suddenly and with some violence, but subsiding almost as quickly. Towards noon, we were enabled again to make sail for the river, and shortly afterwards to come to an anchor, about four miles from the bar. On the following day, I went in company with another boat, for the purpose of sounding the entrance to the Benin: we had got over the bar, and nearly three miles up the river, when, having completed our work and being about to return, the tide made with so much rapidity, that we were obliged instantly to anchor. As the amusement of sitting in a boat watching the unvaried progress of the water as it glides past, is not of the most enlivening description, and as this was the only prospect before us for some hours, I resolved to get on shore, and see

what variety could be met with there: accordingly, I had the boat pulled towards the right bank. As we approached, a town was observed, which determined at once our landing-place, and we were very soon surrounded by a parcel of *sans culottes*, kicking, capering, and screaming like a parcel of scorched bedlamites. We required an introduction to H. M. S. Majesty, and were instantly led or rather squeezed into the presence of the dingy despot, who received us with much civility and good nature; that is to say, he did not eat us, however much his royal gastric might have been agitated by our vicinity. This town enjoys the intellectual name of "Boobie," and his Majesty is indebted to his sponsors for the splendid appellation of "Maccaw," by which cognomen he stands enrolled in the annals of royalty, "*Maccaw King of Boobie.*" We found him a very worthy sort of personage; but our sudden appearance produced much amazement to himself and subjects. This they soon, however, recovered from, and commenced with great earnestness to offer slaves at a very low price; in fact, I could have bought a fellow twice as big as myself, young, good action, and warranted sound, for a jacket and pair of scissors; and, when bought I might have inflicted any cruelty upon him that my fancy could devise, without the slightest interruption from the spectators. Something there is so strange in thus being offered a fellow-creature for so small a sum, that I could not help moralising upon it as a kind of lesson upon our insignificance. To follow the varied course of this being's existence, gives a highly illustrated picture of human vicissitude. First, the helpless infant, depending on its mother to cherish that life which she has given—to her dearer than the world or her own—for the wandering savage of Africa loves her offspring as dearly as the more enlightened mother of Europe: nay, perhaps in many instances, the scale of natural affection would be in favour of the former;* she watches him in his growth, until

* No African mother would trust her tender offspring to the uncertain kindness of another, during those days of helplessness, when it is solely dependent upon her to cherish that existence which she has given. Nature points out the parent's duty, but fashion has driven maternal affection from the breast of European mothers and substituted in its place the hired tenderness of a stranger!

he can sport with the children of his years;—as he advances in life, he feels the native passions stir within him, and he tries to rival the other youths of his tribe; if Nature has made him strong and active, he surpasses them in their wild sports, until he prides himself upon his superiority; he goes then to battle and to conquest; he is valued for his prowess and soon leads them as their chief. Again he meets the enemies of his race, when perhaps, overcome by numbers, or a desperate wound, he becomes a prisoner. Then what a change takes place in his existence! he is confined in a loathsome cell, perhaps for months, until some fellow-creature comes and purchases him for a few pence. He is carried on board a ship, chained, and then stowed with hundreds more in the hold, there to live or die: if he survives the horrors of the voyage, he is landed in a distant country, where this pride of the little world in which he was known, is doomed to pass the remainder of his days, "a bondman in the land of strangers," where every thing is new to him, and where he is thought of as a slave. It is frequently the lot of this life, that youth is cut off when every expectation is about being realised: when the perfection is acquired which it has taken years of application or study to obtain; but then the recollection and regret cease—the grave obliterates all: not so this being—he lives with the remembrance of what he has been, more strongly and bitterly impressed by the perception of what he is. The rude talents which were so much esteemed amongst his countrymen, and which cost him his early life to acquire, are unheeded; and it may be said that he is newborn,—a full-grown child in civilised society.

As this is probably the last occasion I shall have of referring to the sorrows and cruelties of slavery, I may, perhaps, be allowed to make a few observations upon that much-agitated question. It is not my intention to enter upon the subject of slavery with regard to its political importance, but briefly to state *the probable moral benefit conferred upon mankind by its establishment in Africa.* Another reason for my entering

more fully into its particulars is, to make it clearly understood, that the passages in my journal which allude to the miseries and barbarities endured by the slave, apply *only* to the disgraceful manner in which the trade is carried on upon the western coast of Africa, and not in any respect to the *domestic labourer* employed in our West Indian Colonies under the same name. The very first authorities agree in stating that slavery had its origin in a principle of humanity, and an aversion to shedding blood. Justinian says, "Slaves are so called (*servi*), because conquerors, instead of putting their prisoners to death, are accustomed to sell them, and thus save their lives* (*conservare*);" meaning that it was the early custom of the Romans to destroy their prisoners, to avoid the inconvenience of providing for them, or becoming again their opponents. The first step of civilisation put a stop to this inhuman practice, when the more humane course of selling them for servants was adopted.

The traffic in slaves was first commenced between Europe and Africa by the Portuguese in 1443, and by the English during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in 1588. The slaves now sent from Africa to the Brazils and other Portuguese settlements, (for none have been imported into our colonies since the year 1806,) are according to Park, prisoners taken in battle, condemned to slavery for some crime, voluntary slaves, or born in bondage. Undoubted authority exists to prove that prisoners taken in battle were constantly sacrificed in cold blood with the most revolting cruelty; and frequently the propensities of the cannibal gave an additional horror to the scene. Shortly after the commencement of this traffic, the inhabitants on the coast found more benefit from preserving their prisoners, than from sacrificing them to their revenge; in consequence of which, millions have been spared who would otherwise have been immolated on the altar of blood. Bruce says, "The merchandise of slaves has contributed much to abolish two savage African customs,—the eating of captives,

* "Servi autem ex eo appellati sunt, quod Imperatores captivos vendere, ac per hoc servare nec occidere solent."—Just.

and sacrificing them to idols, once universal in that whole continent." Without, therefore, once considering the motive that induced Europeans to commence this traffic, does not Africa owe them something for thus saving generations of her children. This benefit soon extended from the coast to the interior, spreading a comparative enlightenment over the whole continent, and it would be difficult at the present moment to say that a tribe of cannibals exists throughout the country. The second cause of slavery," punishment for offences against society," is an enactment of their own making by which any man committing a crime becomes subject to a certain period of slavery, according to its magnitude. This law is founded upon principles of justice, and perhaps humanity.

The third cause is " voluntary slavery," which arises from a variety of circumstances, the principal being poverty and famine, when a man, to avoid the miseries of one, and pressing calls of the other, sells his liberty rather than his existence; and the poor negro, when fainting with hunger, thinks, like Esau of old," Behold, I am at the point to die, and what profit shall this birthright do to me?"

The fourth cause, it is, perhaps, less easy to vindicate than either of the foregoing, as it is entailing upon an unoffending being the punishment awarded for the crimes or follies of another, and depriving him at once of that birthright to which all are entitled. Those "born in slavery" are the children of natives who have become slaves from one of the above causes. A negro in Africa has the power not only to sell himself and heirs to perpetual bondage, but an offence committed against the state in which he lives may condemn the individual and his generation to a heritage of slavery! From these causes, and especially the latter, the greater portion of the inhabitants of Africa are existing in a state of servitude, without any hope of redemption; and I shall use the words of that enterprising traveller, Park, in proof of this assertion. He says, " The slaves in Africa, I suppose,

are nearly in the proportion of *three* to *one* to the free men: they claim no reward for their services, except food and clothing, and are treated with kindness or severity, according to the good or bad disposition of their masters; and in this condition of life, a great body of the negro inhabitants of Africa have continued from the earliest period of their history, with this aggravation, that their children are born to no other inheritance." From these observations, supported by the above authorities, it will appear that the injustice of the slave-trade is more in name than in reality: that, in fact, when Europeans take the inhabitants of Africa from their native soil, they do not add to the list of slaves, but merely transplant them from a land of ignorance and superstition, to one of civilisation and improvement; and, as a positive fact, I can state that out of forty slaves, of whom the inquiry was made, all but two acknowledged being in that state in their own country, and those thus excepted had voluntarily sold themselves to exile whilst pressed by famine.

The intercourse between Africa and Europe was first stimulated by cupidity: that Africa has derived benefit from this intercourse, cannot be doubted. The inactive character of the negroes would never have led them to improvement in either their laws or customs, and centuries elapsed without producing any apparent change, or advancement towards civilisation. "Their rude ignorance," says Gibbon, "has never invented effectual weapons of defence or destruction; they appear incapable of forming any extensive plans of government or conquest, and the obvious inferiority of their mental faculties has been discovered and abused by the nations of the Temperate Zone." They are, therefore, indebted to their intercourse with Europe for much of the civilisation they have obtained. We are not now so frequently shocked by the reported barbarities of the African savage; and the modern historian has a much brighter picture to represent than that described by Speed, the great geographer of the sixteenth century, who, speaking of some parts of Africa, says, "They have shambles of man's flesh, as we have for meate; they

kill their owne children in the birth, to avoide the trouble of breeding them, and preserve their nation with stolen bratts from their neighbouring countries."

A slight view of the comparative comfort enjoyed by the domesticated slave in the West Indies and his brother of the woods, shall wind up these remarks. The wild savage is the child of passion, unaided by one ray of religion or morality to direct his course, in consequence of which his existence is stained with every crime that can debase human nature to a level with the brute creation. Who can say that the slaves in our colonies are such? Are they not, by comparison with their still savage brethren, enlightened beings? Is not the West Indian negro, therefore, greatly indebted to his master for making him what he is—for having raised him from the state of debasement in which he was born, and placed him in a scale of civilised society?—How can he repay him? He is possessed of nothing—the only return in his power is his servitude. As the ore gives forth the metal as a reward to man for cleansing it of its dross, so the savage, a rude mass of ignorance and vice, mixed with the principles and capabilities of improvement, would live and die in debasement if the hand of civilisation did not step in and cleanse him of his impurities. The man who has seen the wild African roaming in his native woods, and the well-fed happy-looking negro of the West Indies, may perhaps be able to judge of their comparative happiness; the former, I strongly suspect, would be glad to change his state of boasted freedom, starvation, and disease to become the slave of sinners, and the commiseration of saints! I strongly conjecture, that if humanity had come forth a few centuries earlier in the bulk she now possesses, civilisation would have been upset in her voyage to Africa. I shall conclude by just asking the impartial reader, whether the miseries of slavery have not produced the blessings of enlightenment, and thus added another proof to the old but not less just observation, that "*evil is sometimes productive of good?*"

I must again apologise for thus *transgressing* by *digressing*; but, as a further statement of the reasons which induced me to enter into so lengthy a discussion upon this subject would only increase its dimensions, I shall content myself by barely acknowledging the liberty I have taken with my journal, and beg again to lead the indulgent reader to our interview with king Maccaw of Boobie-town. After a few preliminaries, I informed him that we belonged to a man-of-war ship; which made him at once, with much justice and discernment, set us down as "very great rogues," under the impression that we were come to take slave-ships, and, as he would have expressed it, to deprive the honest slavers of their property—a singular contrast of white humanity against black reason; for these people certainly looked upon us in the same light as we should regard pirates, and thought that we acted contrary to all principles of honesty and justice, by depriving the slave-dealer of his right to dispose of some hundreds of his fellow-creatures, whom he had honestly come by! Some of our old "*Saints*," would have stared a little at hearing themselves called "old rogues!" by the sable king of Boobie, and backed by dozens of those very "niggers" their tender hearts had been so long trying to emancipate. I never yet found a native of this coast who did not consider slaves as a very fair description of traffic, and their general statement was—"If me go fight, and run away, then me caught and made prisoner, and me go slave to buckra man; so man I take I sell to buckra, cause him coward." None of them ever expressed a disinclination to become slaves if placed under the same circumstances; but at the same time they had great horror at the idea of ever being sent from their native country. But, as I before said, the erudite king of Boobie and his court, immediately on hearing we belonged to a man-of-war, set us down as suspicious characters; consequently it became my duty to eradicate this impression, and endeavour to convince these discerning people that we were not in any way connected with "those rogues that came to take slave ship." Hear this, ye dignified, high-minded, high-headed

patrolers of the quarter-deck—ye mids of *no* degree, put your caps straight and try to look honest—ye of one epaulette, pray for another, but don't steal it—and ye exalted individuals of two, turn your coats inside out; those much-coveted ornaments to your shoulders will condemn you, for one of these natives in the confidence of friendship told me, that "in man-of-war ship that come stealing, there many bad men; but one them call Cap'n, *him ve'y big rogue.*" To disown any acquaintance with these "rogues" was therefore my only course I accordingly tried to impress upon my suspicious hearers that we were particularly honest people, and come to "make book of river:" this excited some alarm at first; they appeared to think that I intended to make the river into a book, and then carry it off; and one fellow asked with much simplicity, if I "*make book of fish too?*" Few persons, who have not tried it, know the difficulty of conveying ideas into the woolly head of a negro; and the effort necessary to impress upon this intelligent king and his luminous subjects the object I had in view, was almost too much for my patience or ingenuity. Matter-of-fact people of all nations are a "*bore*"—I mean such as take the hyperbolical expressions of a lively imagination in the literal sense of their own plodding capacities, and set the animated and entertaining speaker down as either a confounded distorter of facts—frequently called by a more vulgar appellation—or a most egregious blockhead, fit only to embellish a strait waistcoat or a horse-collar. After trying every mode that my fancy could devise to convey the idea of making a chart, without success, I was about giving it up in despair, and leaving them convinced that I was one of the aforesaid "*rogues.*" I wound up my discourse, however, by saying in a very serious tone, "King, suppose I come to take slave-ship, you think I come see you and drink grog?—No! I go up river, and take ship over bar to my country, and no stop to talk and drink with you."

This piece of eloquence appeared to produce more effect than all I could say about honesty and charts: the one they

16978

did not believe in—the other they knew nothing about; so, after a short silence of reflection, he thrust out his great black fist, saying, "Well, me b'leve you; you tell true; you no *ve'y* big rogue." I acknowledged the compliment, whereupon he sent a party of his slaves to catch a fine pig, which they soon did, and returned with the intended victim, proclaiming aloud, in his own noisy way, the injustice of his Majesty's opinion, and proving it by our intention to rob him of his existence for our personal gratification. Unfortunately, the observations of this intelligent grunter were interrupted by the knife of a quarter-master dissevering his jugular. A large quantity of yams were also added to this seasonable supply of fresh provisions; a thing which we had not indulged in for the last six weeks.

Having, whilst in the river Bonny, seen an English newspaper which mentioned the intended expedition of Captain Clapperton up the Benin, I made inquiries whether he had arrived, but could not discover that such was the case. The king could only inform me, that during the present moon a man-of-war had anchored off the bar, and then sent two boats up the river to cut out a Portuguese slaver, which he, with great dolour, said they had succeeded in doing. Having concluded this interview so much to our satisfaction, we returned to the boats, and with the ebb tide got under weigh for the ship; but when we arrived at the bar, we found the breakers so excessively heavy, that crossing would have been attended with too much danger to be attempted; in consequence we bore up, and ran into a snug anchorage. *Snug* it was:—reader, did you ever lie at the bottom of a river all night while it was gently rolling over you, and upon waking in the morning find yourself wet from the breast to the backbone? Because, if you never did, you can hardly imagine how comfortable we were;—but I meant the *anchor* was *snug* in the situation above mentioned. I had frequently before been wet through, that is to say, my outward man, but never until this moment did I know what it was to have a perfect *cuticle-soaking*; so, that if slight pressure had been applied

upon the body, half a shower might have been squeezed from any one of us. I know not what to compare this night's rain to. It did not come down in drops like common *English rain*, but a sheet of water or *nimbi* seemed encircling us, so that we might have been taken for fish by any one looking from a bit of sun-shine; but, not being intended for that species, and consequently unprovided with scales, we were, as I before said, like so many pieces of wet sponge, and I have hardly ever fancied myself dry since! This wretched night was, however, like most others, followed by a morning, when, anxious to be on board, we got under weigh with a favourable light breeze. We were once more on the bar, and expecting nothing but shortly to be over it—the breakers were playing gently around, and every thing gave promise of "a speedy arrival *and soon*," when in a moment the light waves were turned to boiling foam, the boat's mast bowed to the water's edge, and the wind burst forth, like steam from an exploded boiler,

"Lashing the sleepy billows into rage."

No sign had been observed of its approach, and so sudden and unexpected was the attack, that it is extraordinary the first force of this sweeping tornado did not upset our boat. Not a moment was to be lost: as she recovered herself from the shock, we bore up with the intention of returning, but the prospect was alike on all sides; the dashing waves were beating in every direction, and that we had just passed had become "curling foam" and "sparkling spray." Our situation was critical, as the wind for some time frustrated all our efforts to re-hoist a portion of the sail. The scene was any thing but pleasing; *above us* the rain was pouring in torrents—*around us* the waves were dashing, roaring, and foaming, in apparent disappointment at our having weathered the first force of the hurricane—*waiting for us*, were numerous large sharks, whom we could perceive close to the boat, ever and anon raising their terrific heads, looking anxiously for the pleasure of our company. There is something very forbidding in the appearance of these monsters, and I could

not help thinking how thin and fragile was the plank that kept us from eternity: a moment more, and we might have been vainly struggling to escape from their appalling jaws. A kind Providence here lent us aid, and a slight abatement of the tempest enabled us to get way upon the boat, and soon leave the expecting sharks defeated of their prey. Having no provisions, we instantly made for the shore, trusting once more to the hospitality of the King of Boobie for a supply. I accordingly waited upon his majesty, and requested that he would send the people in the boat whatever was convenient. This he instantly complied with, ordering a pig and plenty of yams to be taken on board.

Before quitting this princely character, I must not omit mentioning a further instance of his kindness and consideration.—Seeing Mr. Rogier, the officer with me, and myself quite wet, he insisted upon our undressing, and equipped us in suits of his own, until ours were perfectly dried: doubtless we cut rather a strange appearance whilst thus rigged, and it would have puzzled our mothers and all our relations to know to what species we belonged: but the intention was the same —a more *refined savage* could have done no more—few would have done so much, and I must show how superior this rude, uncultivated African was to the polished European. We were his enemies, belonging to a nation that deprived him of his trade—were thrown upon his hospitality, and in his power. when, having fed and clothed us, we were allowed to depart. In *our* civilised quarter of the globe, when the shipwrecked mariner is thrown upon a hostile shore, he is instantly seized, cast into prison, and detained as if he were a captive taken in battle. I need not ask which of these two deserves the reward of humanity, but conceive that the untutored savage here offers a lesson worthy of imitation by more civilised princes.

We took leave of this hospitable king, only regretting that it was not in our power to make him some return for the many kindnesses which we had received. At four o'clock on

the same day, it being high water, and the tornado and its effects having subsided, we again got under weigh: when on the bar, we found the raging waves calm and motionless, and the wind "lulled to langour." How the sharks bore their disappointment I had not opportunity or inclination to inquire; but an occasional eddy on the surface of the water, as the monsters turned to propel themselves downwards, induced me to think that they had not quite given up the hope of "tasting our sweet persons."

CHAPTER VIII.

Continued operations of the survey in the Barracouta.— Various rivers, &c. along the coast. Survey of the Calabar river. A conjecture as to its ramifications. Employment of the boats at the entrance of the Rio del Rey.— Completion of the survey from the Cape of Good Hope to Fernando Po, and from thence to Sierra Leone.— Amusement of procuring water and stock. "Pickled chickens" Rats v. *poultry. Peculiar management of the midshipmen's stock. Fernando Po circumnavigated and quitted. Effects of a whirlwind in the Gulf of Guinea. Inconvenient results to the crew of the Barracouta. Arrival at Sierra Leone, and renewed junction with the Leven. Tribute of respect and gratitude to the conduct of Capt. Owen. Captured slave-ships in the harbour at Sierra Leone. A further surveying attempt. Order for the homeward-bound passage. Incidental reflections Termination of the voyage. Remarks on the ancient and modern charts of Africa. Conclusion.*

At day-light on the following morning we got under weigh, and stood with a light breeze to the southward towards Cape Formosa, and then continued along shore for the night, having but little wind. We were three days making the Cape, during which time we had constant employment, track-surveying the coast. We passed several large rivers, in one of which we observed three vessels lying at anchor; but, a fresh breeze getting up from the westward, we did not stop to make inquiries, and were enabled to reach the entrance to the Bonny by the evening, where we found a brig at anchor, and came-to alongside her. Upon sending a boat on

board, she proved to be an English vessel, waiting to complete her cargo of palm-oil. On the following morning we stood along the coast to the eastward, passing several large rivers, most of which had extensive and dangerous bars at their entrance; the coast generally low and woody. Towards noon we began to discern the peak of Fernando Po; and shortly afterwards, the high land of Cameroons. At night we came-to about ten miles from the shore, off Tom Shot's Point, being the western entrance of the Calabar river; and at daylight the next morning despatched the whole of the boats, in order to make an expeditious survey; we were employed, without intermission, for three days at this work.—This river, generally styled in maps the Old Calabar, but more properly the Calabar River, is the largest in the Bight of Biaffra or Benin. The entrance is about fifteen miles wide, with an extensive bar, leaving three and a half fathoms at low water; but when inside, six, seven, and eight, are obtained. There are three shoals between the two points, which leave very good channels on each side. The source of this river has not yet been ascertained, but I am led to believe, that most of the rivers on this part of the coast to the westward, are connected with it; and very probably the whole of the flat sandy country through which they run is an immense cluster of islands, formed by the different branches which connect them. This cannot, of course, be more than conjecture, as my professional duties prevented me from making any efforts to establish it as a fact; at the same time, it is not a mere assertion without observation, as many concurring circumstances gave rise to the idea in my mind whilst employed on the survey; and I feel confident, that in the course of discovery, it will be shown that the numerous rivers which empty themselves along this coast are nearly all indebted to the same mighty source for their existence. To mention the many trifling evidences which, combined, served, to impress this upon my imagination, would be no proof to either the man of science or general reader; but when seen, they carry a living conviction to the mind that their mere mention never can: I shall, therefore, leave it to time and enter-

prise to establish the truth or fallacy of the assertion. The short period we could devote to this river would not admit of our making a very minute survey, but our charts are sufficiently accurate for all the purposes of navigation. We had no intercourse whatever with the natives; not a boat of any description paid us a visit, much to our disappointment, as we could gladly have received any donation in the shape of yams, pigs, chickens, or any other species of fresh provision. Many vessels from England visit this place for cargoes of palm-oil, which they obtain about twenty miles up the river, at the town of Calabar. Having devoted as much time as possible to this survey, we got under weigh, and rounded the land of Backasey, about four miles from the shore, and soon afterwards came-to off the Rio del Rey. This land of Backasey is a very extraordinary projection, separating the two rivers from one another, and forming a kind of promontory. The boats were employed the whole of one day and part of another, in procuring soundings at the entrance of the Rio del Rey, which having done, we made sail to the southward, and came-to under the high land of Cameroons, where we obtained the latitude, for the purpose of joining our work done previously to going to Fernando Po. Having now completed the whole of the coast from the Cape of Good Hope to Fernando Po, and the Leven having done that from Fernando to Sierra Leone, we weighed from the anchorage to the above island, as the most likely place to obtain some fresh provisions, before commencing our passage to Sierra Leone. We were a long time beating towards our destination, and did not reach the land until nearly dark; we therefore stood off for the night, and had plenty of amusement (thanks to a slight tornado, and abundance of rain, thunder, and lightning,) which kept the watch pretty well occupied until morning, when, the wind having moderated, we passed the north end of the island, and shortly afterwards came to an anchor, about a quarter of a mile from the Goat Rock, in seventeen fathoms.

During our stay here, four or five days, we were employed

in the useful and amusing occupations of getting water and stock. The anchor was no sooner down than the canoes flocked on board wholesale, and although during our former visit we could get nothing but yams, yet now we found "cocks and their wives," as the Yankees call them, and these in great abundance. All they demanded for the sacrifice of their feathered associates was the much-prized iron hoop, and two or three inches of this procured a whole generation of chickens, from the right reverend and tough great grandfather, to the tender and almost unfledged pullet. In fact, as soon as they discovered our propensity to the poultry-yard, a wonderful consternation ensued amongst the birds of the air, and many an unhappy macaw and cockatoo had to perform the duty of ducks and geese: their gaudy plumage plucked, pretty *lips* and tufted head decapitated, the discerning taste of Jack swallowed the noisy *screamer* with all the *gout* due to a well-fed *cackler;* and it would have been as easy to persuade him that the ducks of Fernando Po were not web-footed, and had no taste for water, as to convince him that the domestic *gobbler* on a village pond was the genuine *web-footed cockatoo*, with a strong propensity for aquatic excursions. But, as dead poultry of any description would not last a sea voyage of uncertain duration, they were only in request for present use, chickens being the standing article of barter for stock. Every messman was trying his best before starting; and the market was so well provided, that the race appeared to have a fair chance of becoming extinct, an inch or two of hoop always producing plenty of chickens, for which we made our own bargain, they throwing a quantity of yams into the scale, as a kind of embellishment or garnish.

The fate of the three different stocks was rather varied and amusing; and as they shared in our disagreeables, and tried to add to our comforts even at the expense of their own, they deserve a slight mention here, to rescue them from that oblivion in which they would otherwise be buried. Before the mast, they had obtained an immense number of all sizes and ages, and I verily believe I saw the aboriginal cock and hen

of Fernando Po performing a species of dance—quite after the manner of the ancients—before some of the sailors, much to their gratification: this was their last performance previously to being pickled. I dare say few of my readers have ever eaten "*pickled chickens*;" it does not sound nice; but I will relate faithfully the manner in which Jack performed this operation. Their caterer had contrived by various means, which history would rather say nothing about, to obtain *bipeds* enough to fill a thirty-gallon cask. Now, it must be understood, that on board our ship eatables were at a high premium; for, although every man was perfectly honest, and would not on any account have taken a feather from the stock of another, yet there were *some* of our messmates whose gluttony, I regret to say, overcame their notions of honour and honesty, and in fact every proper notion that appertains to gastronomy; some who, labouring under all the disadvantages of a healthy, strong digestion, and not at all respecting the doctrines of *meum* and *tuum*, devoured every thing, living or dead, that came in their way; I need hardly mention the Bandicote, who unfortunately liked chickens to an amazing extent.—Again, eatables in this climate do not improve by keeping; nay, not even when alive; and these unhappy *feathered warblers*, soon after coming on board, ventured to betray symptoms of indigestion* and other bodily infirmities, which would very soon have left them in too unhealthy a state for any stomach but that of the above mentioned rats. In consequence of this pressing to be pickled, Jack was rather hard-run for a time to perform the usual preparatory operations. The brine was therefore got ready, and the poor chickens tumbled in without much ceremony; but here I must draw upon report for my information, and the *on-dits* were, that in the hurry of the moment, and not being *very* particular, Jack forgot to turn out the *inside* of the fowls, and, frequently, to take off the *out*; consequently, many a *feathered* monster sank in the briny flood; nay, report said more, and it was whispered forth

* The writer cannot positively say whether this arose from having nothing to digest, or from some defect in the organs necessary for that operation, but is inclined to think their stomachs in a *particularly healthy state.*

that these *picklers* had, it was supposed, upon a few occasions, actually neglected to deprive the *picklee* of existence; and in corroboration of this it was stated that dreadful screams had been heard to issue from the tub which contained the "pickled chickens," for some little time after the lid had been fastened down. Be these reports true or not I cannot say, but certain I am that the morning after this pickling process such a dreadful effluvia rose on board, that Styx would have been a *pot pourri*, compared with it. Every body stared and looked dreadful inquiries; an investigation was instantly commenced; the result of which was, that this *mauvaise odeur* arose from Jack's pickling-tub, which was ordered to be immediately put overboard, and it required all the powers of three of the strongest sets of olfactories to consign this delicious preserve to the "deep, deep sea;" where, if it did not give the fish in its neighbourhood some pestilential disease, they were not indebted for their escape to "*pickled chickens*;" and thus poor Jack's hopes were at once destroyed!

The captain and gun-room made an immediate seizure of all the coops, into which were crammed their victims, as close as nature and space would admit; and when we left the island it was a glorious sight to see how comfortable they looked—I mean the officers and the chickens—the former to think what a good stock they had, and the latter with the idea of the pleasant voyage before them; for, rammed in by the force of arms, they stood in any position they were fortunate enough to obtain upon their introduction, and there unchanged they *hoped* to remain for three weeks or a month; that is to say, if they happened to be within range of the trough; if not, they had no chance, for all the squeezing and pushing in the world would not get the ravenous aspirant a grain of rice, and he would die of starvation by the side of a neighbour, whose straining throat could just grasp at the end of his beak a portion of their daily meal. Feeding poultry on board a ship is at all times rather a diverting ceremony; I do not exactly know at what periods they are subject to this operation—whether when the boy, whose duty it is, thinks of it, or when he

thinks they will die without; but certain I am that they always eat as if it was not at all a regular or every-day occurrence. Immediately the trough is filled, they commence swallowing its contents with no discretion but that contained in an empty stomach, thrusting their heads and greater part of their throats through the bars; which position they keep until the provender is exhausted: then comes the "tug of war"—the crop, or as sailors call it, "the hold," is full, and many an unfortunate (ducks especially) have I seen with his head and throat filled to an enormous extent, but, not having been withdrawn since the first attack, without the power of the possessor to get it again through the bars; and there they would remain until *black in the face*. How long they could thus exist, I know not, but their gentle shepherd comes when he thinks the proper time has elapsed, and with his fore-finger and thumb deliberately pokes the head and throat back to the disconsolate but attached *corps*. But, to return to our poultry-yard: the idea of a pleasant voyage entertained by these chickens, with the hope of being fed occasionally, was a mere vision of happiness doomed to die in its infancy—there was "something rotten in the state of Denmark." The first morning the poulterer mustered stock, twenty casualties had taken place—nothing but beaks and feathers to return as old stores: next day the mortality was considerable, with plenty of the above emblems; and every succeeding morning the return was greater, and the hopes of the officers less, until not a fowl was left to answer the muster-roll; they had all passed away to the region of *Bandicote*, and nothing but the beaks and feathers remained as evidence of their indigestible nature, and of the absence of their late proprietors. Thus perished the hopes of the cabin and gun-room!

"Midshipmen's stock never dies," is a well-known adage on board a man-of-war, and certainly our youngsters upon this occasion proved themselves brought up in a good school.—Having obtained four or five dozen of the most healthy and happy-looking fowls they could meet with, (for their caterer was a right knowing fellow,) the next difficulty was where

to put them: with a due fear of Bandicote before their eyes, it was agreed, *nem. con.*, that this was a very difficult question, and it was some time before any one would hazard an idea: but at length an enlightened member of the assembly hit upon the bright thought of putting them into the locker in the berth—a place where no Bandicote ever dared to show his savage head, although cock-roaches abounded: but this was not considered an objection, as it was justly observed, that the chickens would, by eating them, make their keep less expensive, besides thinning that branch of destroyers. This motion was carried unanimously, and after a little preparation the fowls were committed, with some appropriate struggles, to the lightless, airless dwelling in which they were to live, if they could, until they were eaten. To accommodate them with respiration and *prospect*, half an inch of the lid was kept open by a wedge, so as not to incommode the young gentlemen when sitting. Upon leaving Fernando Po, their stock was in a most flourishing condition, and it would have been highly amusing to one uninitiated to hear the cocks crowing all dinner-time, perhaps stimulated by the savoury smell of some near relative done in currie; but, whatever the exhilarating cause, the effect was strange, as the sound appeared actually to issue from the young gentlemen, and an ignorant spectator would have boldly asserted that each of them had a living bird in his stomach. In four or five days, however, slight symptoms of indisposition and despondency were observed amongst these chickens, which some attributed to leaving their native land, others to sea-sickness, and a few, with *perhaps* more propriety, to want of exercise: accordingly a new regimen was introduced, and every day after dinner they were taken out two at a time, placed on the table, fed with rice *moderately*, allowed six turns in the *grog-tub*, and then again consigned to their steam Pandemonium—to which the Black-hole at Calcutta must have been an airy paradise. This course of diet and exercise was nevertheless successful, and the ship's company were constantly regaled with the smell of savoury *pillaws* from the midshipmens' berth, long after the others had ceased to exist.

Having heard at Bonny that the harbour in this island where we had before been lying, was not the one usually frequented by ships visiting Fernando Po, after completing our water and stock as aforesaid, we made sail to the northward, for the purpose of circumnavigating the island, in order to ascertain the situation of the one spoken of; but, in consequence of unfavourable winds, we did not again reach our starting-place until four days from our departure, having merely seen the anchorage we were in search of, but not having time to come-to. The view of this island is on all sides very picturesque, being covered with wood even to the water's edge; and the Peak, rising bare and brown in the centre, forming an admirable back-ground to the more fertile scene. But as I have before given a description of this place, further mention is unnecessary.

On the 1st of May, 1826, we left Fernando Po, to make the most expeditious passage to SierraLeone: the wind blew constantly from the south-east, with, for some time, a slight tornado every night. On the 13th, whilst in the Gulf of Guinea, latitude 4° 22′ north, and longitude 2° 04′ east, the wind being south-west, and our course lying west, we tacked and stood to the S.S.E. In the evening we had some rain with lightning, and rather a suspicious calm; but about eleven o'clock a breeze sprang up from the south-east, upon which we shortened sail to fore-sail, and lowered the top-sails on the caps. These and some other precautionary measures had just been taken, when a scene burst upon us which can never be forgotten. The ship was well under way, and bounding over the billows with velocity, or, as beautifully described by Byron, she

"Walked the waters like a thing of life."

when in an instant the wind shifted from the south-east to the north-west, and took us right aback. It came with all its violence at once—no sweeping gust to give notice of its rapid approach, but with all its fury it fell upon us, overwhelming and terrific: even now, when I think upon the fearful velocity of that whirl-wind, I cannot help wondering how we could

have escaped from its destructive power. It is impossible to describe the confusion that it made: as the ship received the shock, she seemed to recoil beneath its force, and, sinking deeply at the stern, it appeared that before she could recover from her awful situation the next wave would bury her for ever in its abyss. Every timber groaned and creaked with frightful discord, while the blast played a dismal requiem as it rushed through the strained rigging. It was an awful moment: every thing that the promptitude of decision could effect was done: the cool command was given and quickly executed; but skill could now do but little, and a sensitive anxiety was felt by all as they watched the half-buried and labouring ship trying to recover from her perilous plunge. Many a beating heart at that moment thought of home, with the sadness of eternal separation; friends, relations, all that were loved rushed upon the mind, and in the silent sigh of despair might have been traced many a sorrowful farewell. But hope again broke upon us; the yielding masts at length relieved the ship, and she rose gracefully from the wave, in which many at that moment feared to find a tomb. The weather during the remainder of this tornado required all the seamanship of our ever active commander, whose coolness upon this occasion was only equalled by his judgment. The rain poured in torrents, and, carried by the hurricane, came upon us with the force of hail-stones, while the lightning played in one continued flash, and, as it danced among the rigging, showed the havoc which our masts and sails had undergone; and it was a providential occurrence that no part of our ship was struck by the many-forked messengers of destruction that were piercing the water around us. We lay in this situation for nearly an hour, without the tornado abating the least of its fury; the waves roaring, dashing, and foaming against us in every direction, and each successive moment appearing destined for our last. Certainly never yet has pen described the terrors and beauties of an ocean storm. It is not the wind, the bursting sky, or bellowing sea, that make it horrible and sublime—for *both* it is: we shrink from its wild rage,

but admire its grandeur, and would pause to look, but the rus of thought blinds the perception; the mind becomes part the battling elements; and the description, when it is passe is not what it would be during its existence. Many who rea this observation will acknowledge its truth, and feel that ther is a something, which no pen has ever touched, wanting t delineate a storm at sea. In these mighty convulsions nature, the feelings vibrate to the surrounding scene; th soul is, by turns, throbbing with anxiety or sinking with des pair, as the elements seem riving the world with their lawles violence, or are confined by the Great Power who rules them

"Then stirs the feeling infinite!",

Conscience, tender recollections, and religious awe combine and man feels his boasted courage forsake him; not his physical courage, but that which makes him commit crime in defiance of his God. Whether I here name it rightly, signifies little; it will be understood by all. When thus surrounded by the terrific power of that Deity, he feels himself subdued; this make him a coward in thought; he loses confidence in himself and his own strength, and turns, with what hope his conscience will allow, to Heaven. But it would be presumption in me to expect to finish that picture which so many abler hands have failed in: I will therefore continue my plain unvarnished "*Journal.*"

The morning broke calm and bright: the hurricane and clouds passed away as if it were a dream; and such we might have thought it, had we not had destructive evidence of its existence. The main-top and mizen-mast were carried away, the fore top mast sprung, and one of the main lower shrouds snapped in two. The fore-top-mast was in so bad a state, that it became absolutely necessary to shift it, and, with the stump of the mizen and part of a top-mast, we contrived to make a pretty good jury-mast, answering many of the purposes of the late mizen. But this was not all we had to undergo for the tornado came armed with every disagreeable consequence. and, with a malice peculiarly severe upon the unfortunate,

left us with the pleasing anticipation of early starvation. But it is necessary to understand, that at Fernando Po we procured, with our ill-fated chickens, a large and equally ill-fated stock of very fine yams, which, at that particular time, were highly valuable. These were put into nets, and fastened to the boats' davits, where they constantly regaled our sight with their pleasing countenances; the boat, by the same chain of events, was dependent upon the mizen for its locality; consequently, with the mast, went boat, davits, yams, and the hopes of the Barracouta. The immediate result was the being put upon one third allowance of meat, and no allowance of bread for although the full allowance was liberally given out, every day, yet the state in which it was, defied all the powers of absolute starvation to feed upon its animated particles. Even the cock-roaches and rats, whose appetites overcame their discretion, soon betrayed symptoms of indigestion, and in many instances, fell victims to too fond an attachment for live biscuits. In consequence of these little privations, or whatever else they may be called, we looked forward with some anxiety to our arrival at Sierra Leone; this was rather an apt illustration of *comparative* happiness; for every body knows that place to be—*not the second worst* in this world, and any gentleman going there from England would only bless the day when he did *not* arrive; while, on the contrary, we were looking forward with pleasure and impatience for the comforts and luxuries we should there meet with: and what is happiness, what is comfort, but comparison? If the prince be reduced to a nobleman he is unhappy; but if the same individual instead of being a prince, had been a commoner, and *then* made a nobleman, he would have been happy. I leave this moral absurdity to be discussed by wiser heads, and only say that our joy was great when on the 4th of June we arrived at Sierra Leone. Our surprise and gratification were considerably enhanced by finding our consort, the Leven, lying at anchor, as well as the Maidstone. Congratulations were mutual, and we felt like the remainder of a long-separated family meeting at Christmas, when a tear falls trickling and

in silence, as the vacancies are observed which used to be filled by those still dear—but now no more.

I must here be allowed to pay a slight tribute of respect to the abilities and kindness of our very excellent Commodore W. F. W. Owen. The former my pen could not enhance the merit of; his works speak for themselves, and future generations will benefit by the talents which compiled them. The kindness which he uniformly showed to all under his command must be impressed deeply upon their recollections. His duty was an arduous one: the constant exposure and exertion were, as I said before, injurious in the extreme to his officers and men. When the melancholy reports were made to him, although no external indications could be observed, to damp the spirit of the survivors, yet it was evident that he felt, and that deeply, for the noble fellows who were gone. All that the tenderness of a father could devise, to guard the thoughtless seamen against the poisonous climate, he insisted upon their conforming to; while the officers were stimulated by his example, not to allow despondency to prey upon their minds, nor thus cherish a powerful ally to disease. Upon our arrival at Sierra Leone, I was personally indebted to him for my restoration to health, and in fact, life. I had for some time been affected with a disease in the liver, accompanied with severe pain in the side; and, within the last two months, had been suffering much from a complaint in the lungs, frequently throwing up large quantities of blood. The doctor said that nothing but great attention to my diet would be of service; but the state of our provisions gave little hopes from that quarter; and I believe if our voyage had lasted another week, nature would have sunk beneath the increasing ills under which she laboured. In fact, I had made up my mind fully for such a result; but it was otherwise ordained, and to a good constitution and the kindness of Capt. Owen, I am indebted for existence. He immediately had me conveyed on board the Leven, where I had every accommodation and attention that my very precarious situation required. For this,

and the numerous other kindnesses which I am indebted to him for, I trust, he will allow me to return my *deep-felt gratitude*: and if I were to express it in the name of all who served and suffered with him in this Expedition, I have little hesitation in saying that I should write that only which they feel.*

We found, upon our arrival, that the cruisers under Commodore Bullen's command, had been very successful in their efforts against the slavers; seven were lying in the harbour, and two came in during our stay; another was unfortunately lost whilst on her passage to Sierra Leone, being upset in a tornado, when 180 slaves and some sailors found a watery grave.

After remaining here for ten days; we got under weigh, in order to survey the coast from Cape Ann to Cape Mesurado; but after four days passed in fruitless efforts to get to the southward, on the 17th of June, 1826, we bore up, to the great delight of every one on board, for the homeward-bound passage. And, I will unhesitatingly say, that this was the happiest moment we had enjoyed for four years and a half. As the order was given, a glow ran through the bosoms of all, which few have felt since, and perhaps, never will feel again, for

> "None are so desolate, but something dear,
> Dearer than self, possesses or possess'd
> A thought which claims the homage of a tear."

It was—"for England, home, and beauty!" All thought our ship felt the magic sound, as she bounded with fresh life and vigour over the waves towards her native shore. I would place you, reader, in our situation: on a distant coast for nearly five years, away from the track of ships for months together; seeing daily our comrades fall around us from the too fa-

* A beautiful and appropriate memorial of their sentiments was presented to Capt. Owen, by the officers and crew of His Majesty's ships Leven and Barracouta, on their return from this Expedition. It was designed and executed by Messrs. Green and Ward, of Cockspur-street; and represents the emblematical figures of the Earth supporting a globe, with a track of this survey accurately delineated in enamel; the whole composed of silver, standing nearly two feet high, dividing at the equator, and then forming a bowl. Beneath is an inscription, in accordance with the feelings that dictated the offering.

tal climate; subject to every privation and danger, with but little information from those most dear to us;—and then hear the word given for "Home!"—you would feel the thoughts rush into broken channels of hope and fear, too varied and almost too pleasing for endurance. We might be compared to the survivors at the close of a bloody battle, when the roar and destruction is over; we felt that we were saved, and thanked heaven for our miraculous escape. The battle we had fought was not bloody, but it was fatal; we saw not the foe that made such ravages upon our brave and unfortunate companions, but all felt that we were subject to its deadly influence without a struggle to be subdued. It was now past, the order was for "Home!" and then I felt that any spot in this dear isle was home; to stand upon the barren waste which her happy sons would scorn, will repay the long absent Briton for all he has endured. They say that Englishmen have not a love of country—ask one of her exiled children, whom years and tender ties may have fixed in a foreign land, where is his home! and he will tell you "England:" that he loves no other country or people; that it would embitter the last moments of his existence to think that his bones should whiten in any but his native soil. No, it is the well-fed, discontented resident, who, never having been in a foreign land, fancies that England is not the home of his affections; but, from necessity, or as a punishment, compel him to leave it, and then he like all her children, sighs for his isle "his native isle," and says,—

"England, with all thy faults, I love thee still!"

But our ship now bears us, after nearly five year's absence, to our native shore: *us*! that little monosyllable is but half filled!—we leave the many on that deadly coast, and return, the *few*. It was melancholy to think at this moment, as our ship bore us from that land, on the changes that the hand of Death had made. I looked round and saw but two or three who had left England with me, and they were pale and almost dying; but the hope that they would once more see all that they loved had thrown a ray of cheerfulness over their pallid

cheeks. When our companions were falling around us, we felt it not so much as now—now that we were leaving upon a foreign shore the remains of those who had left England with us, full of hope, youth, and health, little thinking that they would never more return to those so dear, but moulder on that friendless, fatal coast!

Pardon, kind reader, my giving expression to feelings that still live within me in the freshness of that moment; and if I call from you a tear for my departed comrades, I would place it upon the altar which fond remembrance has raised to their memory, for they lie in a land where the elements alone sound their sad requiem, with little to mark their lonely graves and none to weep over them! But there are some feelings of the human breast that appear to find language but in verse; love and tender recollections are amongst them, for poetry is the eloquence of the heart, as prose is that of the head. I make this my excuse for the following attempt, and as they sleep without an epitaph, a mournful heart offers this slight effort—its only merit its sincerity.

FRIENDSHIP'S MONODY.

Lonely and sad is the spot where we laid them;
In the land of the savage theyr'e mouldering away;
No stone marks their grave, but memory has made them
A tomb in this heart that will never decay.

And can *ye* remember, who loved them so well,
When they left you for ever to visit that shore,
No pang or no look as they bade you farewell,
Which whispered your hearts, "you will see them no more?"

Oh, yes! you remember, there was in that eye
A look full of sadness that spoke of the grave;
As they rush'd from your arms, you felt 'twas to die!
But they died for their country—the young and the brave.

And sorrow still weeps, while affection is beating
Her bosom with grief as she thinks on the dead;
And friendship is yet in remembrance repeating
The name of the heroes whose spirits are fled.

O'er their relics no high mausoleum is raised
That tells to mankind how they suffer'd and died;
They lived not in splendour, in death to be praised
On the tablet of marble—that record of pride.

But, comrades, sleep on, though the world should forget you,
Though the hearts that have loved you should love you no more;
Still, friends of my youth! I shall ever regret you,
And remember your grave on that desolate shore!

But as I would not conclude these papers in a strain of melancholy, having thus paid my slight tribute to those who are gone, I dry the tear from an eye that is not ashamed of it, and will endeavour to call one smile more from my readers before we part, perhaps for ever.

We had rather a tedious passage to England, but it was extraordinary to see how the pale, emaciated figures on board quickly recovered their wonted hale, hearty appearance as we got into more congenial climes. We only touched at the Western Isles for a supply of water; then made as direct a course as possible; and on the 15th of August reached Start Point—the *point* of our attractions.—Having thus got to an anchor at the end of my "*Journal of the Western Coast*," although but a short part of our expedition, I shall conclude by making a few observations upon the ancient and modern charts of Africa. I am partly induced to do this from having recently had an opportunity of seeing a very curious, and in those days considered accurate, map of Africa, both the coast and interior. This work is called "A Prospect of the most famous Parts of the World, performed by John Speed in 1627." I believe the copy which came into my hands is almost the only one extant containing letterpress descriptions, even that in the British Museum being without any: the triteness and singularity of these afford a vast fund of amusement amongst a very little information.

The map of Africa is most admirably engraved, and seems to afford every information that we have been so long and unsuccessfully trying to obtain; so that our *very great grand-*

fathers sat by their firesides, and, with the assistance of John Speed's compendious map, told the exact situation of every town, village, and hamlet, from Timbuctoo to the Cape of Good Hope! This instructive compilation gives every intelligence that the curious or learned can possibly desire; every minute particular is laid down with the greatest nicety. The beasts, birds, and fishes, are all in their proper places: and the angler would have no difficulty, by reference to this map, in choosing his bait before leaving England. An elephant is depicted standing in Africa, his tail resting in Europe, and his trunk on Asia! A lion, in a fantastic gambol, is skipping over a kingdom, while two ostriches and one swan occupy twelve degrees of longitude, by about seven and a half of latitude. A monkey is sitting down comfortably in Nubia, picking cocoa nuts in Abyssinia: and numerous other animals of those days, whose names are not now remembered, and whose persons are, or ought to be extinct, are amusing themselves after their own peculiar fashion, each having his little bit of the world in the same just proportion. The surrounding seas are represented as abounding with fish of most unwieldy dimensions; and so determined is that vivacious and able historian and geographer to let mankind know to what species they belong, that the Island of Madagascar appears more like a mole on the back of a neighbouring dolphin, than the almost continent which its extent implies. A ship is surrounded by half-a-dozen flying fish; but according to relative proportion, she is placed in rather a precarious situation; as nothing is wanting but inclination on the part of its amphibious attendants, to lift it from its briny resting-place, and transport it wherever their malice or desire might dictate. But the most curious part of this map is the minuteness with which the interior is depicted; every town has its precise name and situation, while the rivers are at no loss whatever to find an easy source, course, and exit; and far from any difficulty about the Niger, Mr. Speed lays it down with the greatest precision. Instead of, as in modern charts, presenting nearly forty degrees of latitude, and twenty of longitude,

without a mark to indicate the probability of a town, this is covered with populous cities, as thick as those of England. Whether this map, which doubtless, in its day, was considered perfectly accurate, was compiled from the works of others, or was merely one of imagination, I cannot pretend to say; but I strongly suspect that Mr. John Speed contented himself with a moderately correct outline, and then filled up the interior at his leisure: at all events, compare it with one of our latest charts of the African continent, and any ignorant observer will say, that geographical knowledge has *receded*. The immense blank of from 2 to 3000 miles in modern works is a strong evidence of our ignorance respecting that part of the world, and a convincing proof of the accuracy of the remainder. And far from being unsatisfactory, it is a pleasing contemplation that no pretended knowledge is employed to fill up our charts; that no supposition, however well founded, will add a mark to express the probable existence of a place; and that not until the enterprise of man has made it a certainty, will any addition be made. This will bring them to the highest state of perfection; and a work thus compiled by the present age, will convey a far different impression to those to come from that which Mr. Speed's has brought to us for Time, in all his changes, has made but little alteration in the formation of the earth. We can now in our library bring before us most of the countries of the globe, with a knowledge that what is there is correct; that science and truth were united in the delineation; and in consequence of this accuracy the charts compiled by British talent have obtained the first place in the hydrographical department of Europe! To conclude these observations, I shall again return to the veritable Mr. John Speed, and endeavour to amuse the reader by a few extracts from his very curious description of Africa; which, to enjoy in all the primitive richness of his style, shall be given in his own terse figures of speech. He begins with—

"Terra Nigritarum, the land of negroes; is full of gold and silver, and other commodities; but the inhabitants most bar-

barous; for the most part they live not as if reason guided their actions. Maginus numbers twentie-five provinces of this country which have had their severall governours; now it knoweth but foure kings, and those are—first the King of Tombulum, and he is an infinite rich monarch, hates a Jew to the death of his subject that converseth with him. Second the King of Bornaum, where the people have no proper names—no wives peculiar—and therefore no children which they call their owne. Third, of Goaga, who hath no estate but from his subjects as he spends it. Fourth Gualatum, a poore countrey, God wot, not worth either gentrie, or lawes, or indeed the name of a kingdome.

"Ethiopia Inferior.—The government of this region is under five free kings. First, of Atana, which contains in it two petty kingdomes, of Adel and Adia, and abounds with flesh, honey, wax, gold, ivorie, corne, and very large sheep. Second, Zanguebar; in this stands Mozambique; the inhabitants are practised much in soothsaying, indeed witchcraft. Third, of Monomolopa, in which is reported to be three thousand mines of gold. Here there lives a kinde of Amazons as valiant as men; their king is served in great pompe, and hath a guard of two hundred mastives. Fourth, Cafraria, whose people live in the woods, without lawes, like brutes and here stands the Cape of Good Hope, about which the sea is always rough and dangerous: it hath been especially so to the Spaniard; it is their owne note, insomuch that one was very angry with God, that he suffered the English heretickes to passe it so easily over, and not give his Catholickes the like speed. Fifth, Monicongo, whose inhabitants are in some parts Christians, but in other by-provinces Anthropophagi, and have shambles of man's flesh, as we have for meate; they kill their owne children, in the birth, to avoide the trouble of breeding them, and preserve their nation with stolen bratts from the neighbouring countries."

After thus describing the different kingdoms of Africa, he makes the following draft upon his philosophical attainments;

which would prove quite a gem to any author about attempting a new system of creation.

"And it hath beene the opinion of some vaine philosophers, that for this cause have made the Africans to be the first people; for that there the sunne, by his propinquitie, wrought soonest upon the moisture of the ground, and made it fit for mortalitie to sprout in. And we have a report, if you will believe it, that in ground neere the river Nilus, there have been found mice halfe made up, and Nature taken in the very nicke, when she had already wrought life in the fore parts, head and breast; the hinder joynts yet remaining in the forme of earth!"

This is the author of whom Tyrrel observed, "he was the first English writer who varied from the style of Geoffry of Monmouth, and engaged himself with objects more *solid* and *important*."

RECORDS OF A VOYAGE

TO THE

WESTERN COAST OF AFRICA,

IN

HIS MAJESTY'S SHIP DRYAD,

AND OF THE

SERVICE ON THAT STATION FOR THE SUPPRESSION

OF

THE SLAVE TRADE,

IN THE YEARS

1830, 1831, AND 1832.

BY PETER LEONARD,

SURGEON, ROYAL NAVY.

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1833.

PREFACE.

The principal objects in publishing the following records are, to make known the horrors which attend the Slave-Trade on the western coast of Africa, and the condition and mental capacity of the slaves liberated by our ships of war, and located in Sierre Leone; to expose some of the defects of the laws and treaties, having for their object the suppression of the disgraceful traffic in human beings; and to point out the additional sufferings entailed upon the wretched African as a consequence of these defects.

The Author has no pretensions to the character of a learned traveller, and therefore has contented himself with a simple record of the observations which he made during his visits to different parts of the coast of Africa and its Islands.

If this small volume shall add, however little, to the general acquaintance with the state of Western Africa, and tend to the exposure of the human traffic in slaves, it will gratify the Author to think, that he has in so far forwarded the abolition of a trade so revolting to every feeling of humanity.

VOYAGE

TO

WESTERN AFRICA.

CHAPTER I.

On the 29th of September, 1830, His Majesty's frigate Dryad, sailed from St. Helens, for the western cast of Africa, bearing the blue broad pendant of Commodore John Hayes, C. B. recently appointed to command our naval force employed on the African station for the suppression of the slave trade,—that revolting traffic in our species, which continues, for the sake of pecuniary advantage, to stain with the deepest reproach, thousands of men professing acquaintance with the charitable and benevolent tenets of our religion.

Such conflicting statements are received in England, relative to this most unnatural commerce, from persons whose interest is concerned, and who are connected with a party, that to form a just opinion of the manner in which the slave trade is carried on, and of the actual condition of those rescued from slavery and located at Sierre Leone, is a matter of almost insurmountable difficulty. But this we learn, amidst endless disputes and interminable volleys of vituperation, that the aboriginal inhabitants of Africa continue to be forcibly dragged from their homes; and, though sometimes, and but seldom, rescued from the grasp of their oppressors, are sold

as any other commodity might be, and lorded over by their miscalled Christian brethren of creation, because, forsooth, their physical and moral perception has not been furbished by the chicanery and cunning of artificial society, and because, in them, the "human face divine" happens to be of a darker shade, and their facial angle less accordant with our ideas of symmetry and fair proportion.

Anchoring for a few hours at St Mary's, the largest of the Scilly Islands, for the purpose of obtaining a supply of fresh stock, we sped our way once more across the Golfe de Gascogne, as the French have it,—the Bay of Biscay, or, as it is distinguished in the navy, *par excellence*, "the Bay."

> Death's capital, where most he domineers,
> With all his chosen terrors frowning round;

and stood towards the Island of Teneriffe, which was seen about thirty miles distant, at day break, on the morning of the 26th of October. At dawn, its summit was enveloped in dense clouds of the purest whiteness, and as the day advanced, each mountain top, assisted by the solar influence, gradually divested itself of its fleecy nightcap, and, resplendent with brilliancy of light and shade, seemed just awake to the enjoyment of one of the loveliest days that heaven ever beamed upon the face of nature. Towering above every other pointed summit, the mighty Peak (12,072 feet high according to Humboldt) was seen through a thin smoky haze, that seemed to surround it like a diaphanous garment of thin muslin, shewing the outline of its figure, but hiding all deformity, its apex capt with snow. As we run along shore, scarcely a spot appears that is not destitute of vegetation, unless a scanty sprinkling of stunted shrubs, of a yellowish green hue, fringing the inaccessible cliffs, is to be considered so. The island resembles an immense cinder, universally black and irregular; while the reflected glare of the meridian sun, from many parts of its rugged, glossy, lava-covered surface, contrasted with the deep shade of others, shews as if it were still red hot; and one might almost imagine, that he hears it

hissing in the wild foaming surf which surrounds and lashes its base, and serves to perfect the illusion.

We anchored at Santa Cruz, about half a mile from the shore. This is the second town on the Island, Oratava being the capital. It has a very pretty appearance from the roadstead, all the houses being fancifully painted of a white, orange, or pink colour, and covered with red tiles—some of them flat-roofed, with here and there a garden, whose orange and banana trees afford a relief to the eye, after wandering over so large a tract of rugged waste, devoid of foliage. Defended by several batteries and fortifications, not in themselves remarkable for strength, Santa Cruz is memorable for the brave and successful resistance it made to the gallant attempt of our hero Nelson, who, in the conflict, lost his arm, and had very nearly lost his valuable life, in whose vocabulary, amidst all his mighty enterprises, the word "defeat" had never before been introduced. Two or three rather handsome spires rear themselves in different parts of the town. In La Iglesia Parroquia de Concession—the parochial church, which possesses the best of these spires—are still to be seen two union-jacks, the trophies taken from us on that occasion. They are preserved with the greatest care, and are pointed out with much pride by the inhabitants: and I think there was no discomfiture encountered during that eventful period, which we have less reason to regret, or concerning which we need less grudge our opponents a little innocent vapouring. The attack, defence, and subsequent capitulation, were alike honourable to both parties.

Behind, and to the westward of the town, for a mile or two, the country forms a gradual ascent, unlike the abrupt perpendicularity of that to the north-east; and the whole of this acclivity appears to be highly cultivated, and divided into numerous ridges, by low walls of loose stones traversing the slope, apparently for the purpose of preventing the soil from being swept away by the rains from the hills. The neighbourhood of Santa Cruz is by no means one of the finest parts

of the island. Here are no vineyards, and as autumn is just over, and the rearing of barley and Indian corn being the principal employment of the farmers in the vicinity, the stubble of these only remains, interspersed with numerous prickly pear bushes; so that, were it not for the fruit trees in the gardens, and the bright sun, every thing would look bare and winter-like. On landing at the Mole, the first object which attracts the attention of a stranger, is the singular head-dress of the lower order of females. It consists of an oval shaped piece of flannel, half as large as a common shawl, broadly edged with white satin riband placed on the head, with one edge as far forward as the brow, the two extremities of the oval hanging down as low as the middle before, and the edge corresponding to that on the brow extending down as far as the waist behind. Over this is placed a gentleman's common black beaver, or a coarse straw hat of the same shape. The aristocratical portion of the sex wear the same superstructure, but of finer material. To our English optics, a female attired in the *bona fide* head dress of a male, must at all times appear a phenomenon, unless when matched with that preposterous unrolled bale of blue cloth, called a riding-habit: but when this same distinctive mark of the sex surmounts a head covered with flannel, it puts one in mind of the hags in Macbeth, and all their horrid incantations. Going along the Mole, we meet with camels and asses carrying heavy burdens in a sort of pannier, placed across the back; oxen yoked, and dragging ponderous casks on a triangle of wood, without wheels; and, as we proceed through the town, we meet the embrowned peasantry, with their loose shirt sleeves and inexpressibles open at the knee, mounted on mules or small slender ponies, with long goads in their hands, and their jackets thrown carelessly over the shoulder—rather a hardy shrewd-looking race of fellows. The young children running about the streets also attract attention by their squalid appearance and almost perfect state of nudity; a shirt being in general the only article of dress, and that so tattered and full of holes, that little attention to decency is exhibited in a

covering so well ventilated. After leaving the Mole, and turning a little to the left, we enter the Plaza Real de Castello, rather a pretty looking oblong square, though on a small scale, having a handsome marble obelisk at one end, surmounted by a statue of the Virgin of Candelaria, the patron saint of the Island, (an Italian work of art, erected by a devotee, and brought over here at considerable expense,) and a cross of marble at the other; its centre paved with flags, and surrounded with stone seats for the convenience of the lieges. The Mole, Plaza Real, and Almeida—a small public garden at the north end of the former—are the fashionable lounges. The garden is thrown open only towards evening, when the Iberian beauties venture out, after the sun has hid himself behind the mountains. The streets are of a very respectable width, extremely clean, and well paved. Cafés and billiard-tables are numerous, and the coffee and ices which they supply, by no means despicable. A hotel, kept by Mr Richardson, an Englishman, in the Caille San Jose, affords every thing which a brief occupant can desire; and what is wanting in some comforts, is made up by the airiness of the apartments, so necessary during the hot season, and the neatness and cleanliness of the whole. Oranges, (which are not quite ripe as yet,) bananas, melons, guavas, grapes, apples, preserved fruits, may be had here in great abundance and perfection. The bread is very good, and the beef and mutton tolerable. Red-legged partridges are very plentiful, and the ortolan may be had at a certain season of the year. Instead of shooting the former, the natives have a less expensive method of obtaining them. Towards evening, they observe where the birds perch, and, taking a covered lantern with them, they proceed to the spot after dark, and suddenly unveil it; the silly birds, dazzled by its glare, flutter round the light, and are easily taken hold of with the hand. The vegetables are very good, particularly the sweet potato and tomata, and every article of food is remarkably reasonable. The water is excellent, with which the town is supplied from a spring on the south side of a mountain, two or three

miles to the eastward, by means of an aqueduct, formed of the pitch pine, supported the whole way by props of the same, so that it resembles, at a distance, a long and irregular paling. From being so long exposed to the sun's rays, however, the water is almost lukewarm when it reaches the town, but there is ice in abundance from the Peak to cool it with.

Santa Cruz is intersected to the westward by the bed of a mountain torrent, 90 or 100 feet wide; and some distance out of town, to the eastward, there is another very large gully of a similar description between the mountains, which may be seen from the anchorage. The body of water which rushes down these hollow channels during the rains, is sometimes immense. General Morales is the present governor of the Canary Islands,—a man of distinguished bravery, and celebrated for his resolute and pertinacious support of the Spanish sovereignty in America. His usual residence is at Santa Cruz; occasionally, however, making the circuit of the other islands, a system of government which might very well be adopted in our West India Islands; and, as retrenchment is the order of the day, might judiciously save to the mother country the salaries which she annually pays to a number of peddling governors, Ferdinand's wretched imbecile government is unable, or unwilling, to pay this brave man the paltry salary of 3000 dollars per annum attached to his appointment. He is at present fourteen months in arrears of pay, and in consequence cannot even accept an invitation to dinner, as he has not the means of doing a similar act of courtesy in return. The country would be robbed to meet any demand made on the purse of this ignorant despot, for the purpose of supporting some mummery of Catholicism, while a gallant and faithful servant, in the execution of an important trust, is allowed to live without the means of supporting his high character for hospitality, and his station as an officer of rank and a gentleman. How heartily he must despise, and how deeply deplore, being the servant of a government so utterly destitute of all that is good and great! The bishop's

income is infinitely larger than that of the governor; and the numerous sleek and lazy priesthood who infest the island, and fatten on the loaves and fishes obtained by the hard won earnings of the industrious poor, are the cause of much murmuring and discontent among them. Patterns of religious practice and morality, and patrons of virtue, with extravagant incomes, are extremely rare. It is hardly to be expected that it should be otherwise, while they are supplied with ample means of obtaining every luxury, and gratifying every passion; and are, at the same time, utterly unacquainted in practice with the daily toil, penury, and adversity of the labourer. Their religious practice consists in set forms of prayer; their patronage of virtue in having their names conspicuously placed on the list of members or supporters of some benevolent institution, concerning which they know nothing further than that there is an annual dinner which they may as well amuse themselves by attending; and as to their morality, that may be left between them and their consciences. Like the poor Indian who planted a piece of iron hoop in the ground, expecting to reap, in due time, a plentiful crop of nails, the good people of Santa Cruz expect, among the higher classes of their clergy, a combination of things which are, without a miracle, incompatible, namely—rank, humility, riches, charity, ease, sympathy with the afflicted, luxury, self-denial.

The charge made by the authorities here on letters or newspapers arriving from England is enormous. Half a dollar is demanded, on delivery, for each single letter, and newspapers and packages sent to the post-office from packets or merchant vessels, are charged in the same ratio. This exorbitant claim is complained of very much by the few English residing here, but they have no remedy.

A great number of fishing-boats belonging to this island are constantly employed on the African coast. The fish they take consist chiefly of cod and bream, which, when salted and dried, form a principal article of food to the inhabitants

of these islands. There is also a little trading carried on with the Arabs on the coast, for gold dust, &c.; but this being contrary to law, is done "under the rose." The fishermen here make use of torches of pitch pine, by the glare of which the fish is attracted to their boats. Numbers of these appear every evening, like meteors floating on the surface of the water.

A stranger is surprised to find, that the Fringilla Canaria, which, for its sweet warbling note, we have domesticated in England, is here of a grayish-green colour, instead of the light yellow with which we should naturally expect to see it clothed in its own legitimate place of abode. I am told, that, in their wild state, the Canary birds have no song, and that it is only by domestication that they assume the beautiful straw colour, and acquire the mellow note which they possess to such perfection in England. There are only about 600 soldiers at Santa Cruz, and the greater number of these are militia. The aristocracy consists of twelve families, descendants of the original invaders of the island.

The air at this season is delightfully pure and dry; its daily temperature from sixty to seventy degrees of Fahrenheit; and I should think that the cool, salubrious climate of this island is at least equal to that of Madeira for convalescents, and those labouring under irremediable complaints, such as phthisis, had it but the same variegated and cheerful scenery. Such may be found in the interior, but all is bleak and bare in our vicinity.

30 Oct. We sailed last evening. The easterly trade wind has wafted us along so rapidly during the night, that no vestige even of the lofty Peak is to be seen this morning The startled flying fish, scared by every plunge as we rush through the water, are seen to emerge in vast numbers from their liquid element, flutter on a-head, or rush through the air from the vessel's side, for a hundred yards or so, and again to dip their glistening finny pinions in the wave, until our speedy

course once more disturbs them in their lucid domicile. Numerous dolphins follow in our train, resplendent even under the whirling foam of our pathless track in the dark blue sea. Separated, as we now are, from every civilized country, to lead at the best a precarious existence under a tropical sun, on the shores of a continent whose very name is associated in every one's mind with disease, death, and slavery, and by us, who would not die the death of dogs, with all that is forbidding to those who love life, not for its own sake, but for the cognate hearts, the happy homes, and the cheerful society which we have left behind us, and exchanged for intercommunity with savages, dull looks, and gloomier thoughts, and the perpetual risk, at every step, of death from a poisoned atmosphere; many strange and somewhat appalling thoughts naturally present themselves to our imaginations. One while we are assured that a return is next to impossible, or, if our guiding star should be so propitious, it will be with impaired health: the choicest jewel of the casket will be lost. Again, hope, like a cunning juggler, intermingles with our darker thoughts, perverts our reason, and flatters us with the fond belief that all may yet be well. It is said that about one-fourth of the white population of Sierra Leone die annually. Fatal as its climate is, this statement is undoubtedly exaggerated. But the unvarnished account which an officer on board gives of it, who had once the good fortune to escape unimpaired from its baleful influence, speaks volumes. Grave as the subject must be, it is almost impossible to avoid smiling at the unique winding up of the sad history of almost every person he met with at Freetown.

Speaking of an intelligent gentleman who had gone out to fill an important situation in the colony, our conversation run thus,—

"Well," said I, "he must be a most desirable acquaintance. You knew him before his arrival at Sierra Leone, I think you said?"

"O yes; our intimacy had been of some standing."

"How did he get on after being established?"

"Why I went to sea for ten days, and on my return called and found—that he had been buried nearly a week before!"

"You were describing the gentleman who went out as a missionary to be an excellent person. If any one thing in the world can make a man happy in his journeyings through life, it must be the consolation of having his wife and children always with him. Did they like the place?"

"I am sorry to say Mrs. —— died, after a few hours illness, on the day of her arrival; and the rest of her poor family followed her within a week. The husband was the last, and death to him was a blessing."

In fact, the brief history of almost every poor devil, whether resident or casual visitor, is wound up by our friend with these words, "He died one day." A most pleasant prospect we have here before us. But we are in for it; and as life is as an April day, we may as well enjoy the sunshine, and let the showers come when they will. And so we pass an occasional joke on the probability of what may occur to ourselves, and be said of us by some fortunate survivor:

"What has become of B——?" I don't see his name in the list."

"Poor fellow, he went out in the Dryad to the coast of Africa, and died three days after his arrival."

"What a fool he was to risk his health in such a cursed climate."

"Why H—— was such a good humoured fellow that death surely had not the heart to choak him."

"It is a common remark that death always takes the worthiest and leaves the worst. He held on for some time, but finding the champagne very good at ——, he slept on shore one night, and that's quite enough, you know. He died in forty-eight hours."

Jesting in this manner with the risk we run disarms it of half its terrors; but it is a sort of furbished and constrained

courage, much of the same kind as that which men acquire by the abuse and ridicule of an enemy whose power they are conscious of. Placing any foibles or peculiarities he may possess in a preposterous and ridiculous view, while they obscure or speak lightly of his irresistible strength and prowess, they acquire a sort of indifference or contempt for him.

6th November.. We made the Cape Verd Islands yesterday. St. Jago, along the eastern shore of which we are gradually advancing, at the distance of a few miles, with a light north-east breeze, has two or three alpine heights in the interior, resembling in their craggy perpendicularity those of Teneriffe; but in every other respect the islands have a totally dissimilar appearance. With the exception of these central mountains, the hills, which are numerous, and progressively increase in height from the sea coast, appear of gradual and easy ascent, rounded at the summit, covered with grass and shrubs, much embrowned by the sun, and interspersed with vallies and declivities, rich with green foliage and cultivation. Numerous herds of cattle are brousing near the sea shore, where it is almost a level champaign for several miles.

We anchored at Porto Praya early in the afternoon. The town of Praya has a bare and wretched appearance. It is situated at the head of a shallow bay, on a prominence, bounded on each side by two low swampy pieces of ground, covered with cocoa nut trees, in one of which are to be seen some ruined buildings, which the marsh effluvia have probably rendered tenantless. On the same eminence, skirting the cliff in front of the town, stands a battery of twenty-six guns, or rather a range of guns, for the dilapidated embrasures, and the unserviceable appearance of the guns themselves, can hardly obtain for them the name of a battery; and the eastern side of the bay is flanked with a few pieces of artillery, without any raised work whatever. The country behind the town of Praya has a very pleasing appearance. Its yellowish brown undulating hills, gradually increasing in altitude ti"

they terminate in a lofty accuminated mountain, perpendicularly steep on one side, declivous on the other, called the Peak of St. Anthony, resemble, in no small degree, many parts of the Morea.

The landing-place is on the right hand side of the bay, on some rocks in their primitive state, uninfluenced by the commodious agency of art. From this the road lies along the beach of ashes, instead of sand, bordering the low ground to the left of the town, at the termination of which you ascend a road so called,—a rough cast path, narrow and full of asperities,—to the top of the prominence, on which stands the town of Praya, one of the most miserable places of abode for civilized human beings I have ever witnessed. The town is very small, consisting of a plaza, or square, in which there is a small church, and two principal streets extending from its north extremity, into which a few smaller ones open, and cannot contain many inhabitants, as the whole number on the island is only 12,000. The houses are small, whitewashed and covered with red tiles, and, as well as the streets, are beyond description filthy. Innumerable pigs, goats, and asses, are constantly running about; and at every corner are to be seen men and women lying on the ground, assisting each other to remove from their heads and bodies another sort of live stock, which appeared to be exceedingly abundant. The black children, until the age of twelve or fourteen, have literally not a rag to cover them. Even in this small place, there are two jails, filthy, confined receptacles, both of which appear to be full. Their wretched inmates, among whom were several Americans and two Englishmen, appeared to be of the most worthless description. The two Englishmen had been confined for mutiny on board a merchant vessel; one of them we took with us, the other was too unwell to admit of removal. The sickly season is just over, but cases of intermittent and remittent fever are still to be met with. About a fortnight ago, fever was very prevalent, and every one has a squallid, sallow, unhealthy, death-like aspect. I am not surprised at it; for, to say nothing of the flat, marshy grounds on each side of

the town, the corrupting filth about the streets is enough to contaminate any atmosphere. The Portuguese are proverbially dirty. I have had not a few opportunities of observing them, as well as the people of various countries, and the balance in my mind is greatly against them. It is singularly ludicrous to hear the inhabitants of this place, as well as the American Consul, who has been an exile here for seven years, and is contaminated with all the local prejudices, lauding the salubrity of the climate to the skies, although he himself has lately risen unexpectedly from a sick couch, and although fever, in all its grades of intensity, was, but a few weeks ago, the inmate of almost every domestic hearth. When I asked how there were so many embodied skeletons, lank and lanterned-jawed, moving about; and how it happened that so many of the officers of his Majesty's ship Tweed, which touched here about three years ago, died, after sleeping a single night on shore, the answer was,—"It is all owing to excess, or to some peculiarity in the manner of life." The idea of climatorial or local insalubrity could not for a moment be entertained. These people are not unexampled in this respect; I have observed that the natives and naturalized of almost all unhealthy climates are similarly prejudiced,—a circumstance which might be taken as another collateral proof that the ratio of insusceptibility to the effects of a mephitic atmosphere is inverse to the length of residence. When our troops were dying by hundreds in Walcheren, the good Zealanders, educated as well as ignorant, scouted the notion of insalubrity, and tried to persuade the languishing *unacclimates* that the damp air and noisome exhalations from their miry soil, canals, and ditches, formed the most wholesome and respirable ether imaginable. The governor of the Cape Verd Islands resides here, in a house of the most beggarly description. He is a captain in the Portuguese navy, and has a few regulars and black troops under his command, whose appearance is by no means formidable. Underneath the windows of his hall of audience, the largest and best room in the house, or indeed in the town, —which by the by contained, as furniture, six chairs,—there

was a *magnificent* court-yard, strewed with straw, containing great numbers of hogs, poultry, and asses, and having in the midst of all a huge monkey, fastened by a chain and staple to the ground,—the whole making the most incessant, hete-terogeneous, and stunning noise that human ear ever listened to.

Fruit is very plentiful,—oranges, bananas, cocoa nuts, pine apples, and lemons. We were led to believe, from some printed authorities on board, that poultry was unusually cheap, but found them nowise remarkably so, although very plentiful and excellent, particularly turkeys. According to the same authorities, any thing might be had for old clothes; but we found the natives as apt at valuation, or rather at depreciation, as any of the tribe of Judah in Rosemary Lane could possibly be. We must, of course, attribute all this to the march of intellect, to the travels of the schoolmaster, rather than to any wilful misrepresentation. Numerous boats, technically denominated "bum-boats," the derivation of which radically appellative remains, I believe, still an enigma, bring along side plenty of fruit, fowls, and eggs, for sale or barter.

A shark was caught last night, upwards of ten feet long. The monster had a liver of at least a hundred weight. In his maw were found half digested lobsters, ribs of beef, and various other articles. Nothing affords a sailor more satisfaction than the capture of one of these pirates of the deep. Legitimate enemies of his, as well as of every other salt water animal, he cordially hates them as much as he does the sharks ashore,* and feels as much pleasure in cutting up the one, as he does in kicking the other. The American Consul, who officiates during the absence of our own in England, obligingly obtained for us all that we wanted of sea stock; and having received intelligence from this gentlemen, of two piratical vessels which had for some time infested the neighbourhood of these islands, we sailed to-day, (8th,) in search of

* *Land Sharks*—Lawyers and their emissaries.

them, glad even to exchange this Portuguese abomination for Sierra Leone, and all the risks and privations of the coast of Africa. As we run along shore to the westward of Porto Praya, the land begins to lose its character of hill and dale, and becomes rocky, irregular, and full of ravines; and has every where its volcanic origin strongly marked.

9th November. We boarded a Brazilian brig to-day, sixty-nine days from Angola, which, according to the account of the master, was bound to the Cape Verds for a cargo of salt. They had plenty of water, but their provisions being expended, we supplied them with sufficient for a week. The knowing ones assert, that she is one of those vessels the merchants employ to bring over spirits, tobacco, gunpowder, cloth, &c. for the purpose of bartering for slaves—these on purchase being transported across the Atlantic in fast sailing armed vessels, or "clippers," as brother Jonathan would designate them. After discharging on the coast, these "trade ships," as they are called, usually make a run up here for salt, which is a commodity of some value in Brazil.

11th. We anchored at Porto Grande, in the Island of St. Vincent, this evening, and obtained intelligence of four schooners having been here during the last three months, two of which, under the Spanish flag, appeared to be slave traders, under French colours, possessing some of the attributes of pirates, and answering in some measure the description we had received. The deputy governor here, Joaquim Ignacio Nobre, behaved in the frankest manner, answering all our questions most unreservedly, and supplying information where ours was defective.

At the head of this bay, which is a most commodious anchorage, stands a ruined church, a custom house, and an assemblage of huts, which scarcely merit the name of a town. The country, full of crags and prominences, like the other islands, has evidently the appearance of a volcanic origin, but comprises some large valleys, which, although at present

wholly uncultivated, through the indolence of its possessors, Portuguese, might be rendered exceedingly productive. Even fruit, the rearing of which may be so easily effected in these latitudes, is an article of great scarcity. That which they do possess is principally obtained from St. Antonia, one of the neighbouring islands. To those of us who went on shore, the natives were respectful, attentive, and hospitable. At home, hospitality is a subject much talked of, but little practised, unless in the most obscure districts, where usury in matters of benevolence is still unknown: There, such heartlessness is little felt, but to us, wanderers in a strange land, a hospitable smile is of the greatest value. Abroad, as well as at home, we often meet with men whose whole thoughts are concentrated in the pence and farthing column of their cash accounts, among whom generous and liberal sentiment is a scarce commodity. Sordid parsimony is the load star of all curmudgeons of this class, and hospitality is a word seldom whispered within their gates; for covetousness withers the leaves of their better feelings like a baleful east wind, or like the adherent dross of an unsmolten metal, it obscures the lustre and impedes the usefulness of the precious substance to which it so tenaciously clings. Sailors possess a character for hospitality—an open-hearted feeling of kindness—more eminently than any other class of men. "Schooled in adversity, and cradled in the storm," though generally strangers to each other, their circumscribed society, their manner of life, secluded and friendless, make them feel that mutual assistance and mutual good-will, are not mere virtues to be talked of, but actual duties to be performed. They have no selfishness; dependent upon each other for every comfort they enjoy, they are covetous of nothing but a character for courage, and tenacious of nothing but their good name. When on shore, eccentricity may be his characteristic; but disinterested liberality and benevolence, too often misapplied, are also inseparable peculiarities of a sailor.

13th. We sailed again early this morning, and stood to-

ward St. Lucia, where we anchored about three P. M. This island appears about five or six miles long, flat to the southward, mountainous to the north-westward, and affords pasture for numbers of wild oxen and goats, and shelter for thirty or forty individuals, the greater part of whom come here from the other islands at particular seasons, to prepare barilla. The soil in the valleys is sandy and alluvial, but there is not the slightest vestige of cultivation, if we except the situation of a few cotton plants, at one end of the only hut on the island. In this humble abode, they had bananas and Indian corn brought from another island, goats' milk, cheese, and turtles' eggs. One of their fishing boats arrived while I was there, and brought a great number of bream, rockcod, mullet, and a species of gurnard; but the greatest want here, as at St. Vincent, appears to be good water. I observed a well near the hut, but the water was of a greenish colour, and had a disagreeable taste and smell. Vegetation, as well as water, is so exceedingly scanty, that it is a matter of surprise how such numbers of animals, horses, asses, wild oxen, and goats, can find sufficient articles of nourishment.

15th. The anchor was got up again this morning, and dropt at port St. George in the island of St. Nicholas,—rocky, mountainous, bare, and uncultivated, like the two former.—In getting under weigh, a poor boy fell from the mizen-top, and was killed on the spot. Still unsuccessful in our search, we sailed early the following morning for Boa Vista, which we reached on the 17th, anchoring in English Road. Compared with the rest of the group, this island is flat, with here and there a hummock, or moderately sized hill; and, like the others, there is scarcely a tree to be seen, but I was told by Colonel Martinez, the Portuguese Government agent, that the interior of the island is very fertile, and that much attention had been paid to its improvement. There are two small towns here, on opposite sides of the bay, neither of which have a very prepossessing appearance. In Boa Vista, the chief of these, however, a rather inviting sign—to wit, the

"Union Hotel" posted in gigantic letters, in front of what appears to be the best house in the place—presents itself to the desiring gaze of the inhabitants of all floating prison-houses in the anchorage. The town will not bear a description. There are not more than forty or fifty houses in the place, and most of these rather merit the name of huts. I landed on the 18th, at the request of Colonel Martinez, on a professional visit to his wife, who is afflicted with a most painful disease of the eyes. I had many acknowledgments, of course, besides a present of a hundred-weight of coffee from his own plantation, in the interior of the island, which could not be pertinaciously denied without the risk of offence. This person, I have since been told, is one of the most extensive slave dealers on the coast of Africa, having, it is said, with a relation at Havana of the same name, more vessels employed in that facinorous traffic than any other individual. His property and influence in most of these islands is also very extensive.

The inhabitants of this island may be said to be one family, they are so connected with each other by intermarriage, or some tie of relationship. I think the colonel, who speaks English very well, and is a very intelligent person, said, that he could claim kindred with upwards of two hundred families, while many others of whom he knew little more than the name, might remotely claim the same with him.

On the landing-place there are immense heaps of coarse salt piled up, ready for exportation. It is obtained from salt springs, situated in a valley, a short distance inland from the town; here large superficial holes are dug, when the water oozes out very copiously, almost saturated with the muriate, requiring only a short evaporation to produce crystallization. Most of this is sent to Brazil. A large Bremen ship of 700 tons is lying here at present, ready to take in a cargo for Rio de Janeiro.

The militia of this island have a most unmartial appear-

ance. A short description of the town-house sentinel, placed, no doubt, as the best specimen previous to our landing, will be sufficiently characteristic of the body. He was a tall, stout black, carrying a rusty musket, having his head covered with an old straw hat; his body with a gray jacket, out at elbows, the sleeves too short for his long arms; coarse shirt of incalculably remote purification; and unmentionables of an unknown colour, and most perflated and cribriform construction; shoes and stockings *desunt.* The various hue of the rest of the military of the island, both in dress and colour of the skin, was not less grotesque.

The orchil (*lichen rocella*) or litmus, collected on this island, affords a revenue to the Portuguese government of from £30,000 to £40,000 per annum. The natives complain exceedingly of the infamously low price which they receive from the government agent, who has six per cent for collecting, packing, and exporting it,) for this valuable lichen, although it is not the fault of the agent, but that of the government, which insists upon its being so low. As none of it is allowed to be exported but through the hands of these agents, (one of which there is in every island,) on government account, the poor peasant has no alternative but to accept what price may be offered. This is usually 40 reis (about twopence) per pound. A quintal, which consists of 128 pounds, costs the government, including all expenses, about £5, and is sold in Lisbon for £50 so that it is calculated, that by the sale of twenty hundred weight of this article, the government has 60,000 dollars clean gain. Here is oppression, with a vengeance! It is collected, too, with no small degree of danger from the faces of rocks and precipices, over which the natives sling each other, much in the same manner as the fowlers of St. Kilda. Every thing in these islands is monopolized by the agents of the mother country, who being the only licensed purchasers, put whatever price they choose on all produce: consequently, as no competition in the market is allowed, the people have no adequate return for their labour,

and continue in a state of beggary, while the government and its myrmidons become enriched by their industry.

The temperature of these islands is by no means oppressive at present. It is seldom higher than seventy-eight, or lower than seventy-six, degrees, and there is always a brisk breeze from the east-north-east, but the air is damp and clammy.

19th. We sailed again to-day, without obtaining any information relative to the object of our search, farther than that a Spanish schooner had attacked a French vessel of the same description in this bay one night lately, and was beaten off. Where she had gone to since was uncertain. While at Boa Vista, we took on board a number of guns and an anchor saved from the wreck of his Majesty's ship Erne, lost on the island of Sal, in 1819. By the by, Colonel Martinez, slave dealer as he is, possesses a very handsome piece of plate, presented to him by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, for the protection he had afforded to the people and stores belonging to this vessel. The salver bears an inscription expressive of their high sense of his generosity.

The cruize we have had among these islands was quite unexpected, and I believe every one is heartily tired of it, and glad that we are at least on our way to Sierra Leone, without fear of interruption. The healthy season has already commenced there, so that we are too late to be "in at the death."

27th. To-day, we are in latitude nine degrees twenty-five minutes, longitude seventeen degrees twenty-one minutes, one hundred and twenty miles from Orango Island, and about two hundred and fifty from Sierra Leone. I am so particular in thus stating our position, because, although Orango Island is the nearest land, every person on board is sensible of a very strong aromatic odour in the air, undoubtedly wafted by the breeze from the main or its islands,—an agreeable perfume probably like that which we are told regaled the senses of Hanno, the Carthaginian Admiral, and his followers, during

ıeir voyage of discovery, upwards of two thousand years ago, lthough I believe it is disputed whether they were so far to he southward, or so distant from the land. The wind is north ıst, blowing directly off the coast, and the atmosphere is damp nd hazy.

We have been near losing two of the ship's company, from he bad effects of sleeping one night on shore, and inhaling ıccording to the spectral inhabitants) the healthful and life-ıiving air of Porto Praya. These two persons, a seaman and boy, lost their passage on board in the last boat, on the even-ng before we sailed, and not being able to obtain one of the ıland boats to bring them off, they were obliged to remain for he night. Eighteen hours elapsed from the time they left the hip, until their return next day, the 8th of November, in the renoon of which we sailed. On the 18th, ten days after-ards, the boy was attacked with the endemial fever, in so ligh a degree of intensity, that his life was only declared out f danger to-day. He did not apply for medical aid until the 0th, and of course during this interval, the disease was mak-ng most rapid progress. On the 22d, the seaman also shewed e was labouring under the influence of the same poison, but he equested advice on the first invasion of the disease, and by time-y combating it with the most energetic measures its violence ras restrained, and its character changed into that of a common ertian ague; from which, however, he is still suffering, but n a mitigated degree, and free from danger. So much for the wholesome climate of Porto Praya, which, as I said before, is one of the most hateful human residences in the whole world

29th. We are this morning within fifty miles of our desti-nation. Great numbers of bats and small birds have been caught flying about the ship yesterday and to-day. In the morning two vessels made their appearance to windward which proved to be his majesty's brig Plumper, and a "*rakish*' vessel she had just examined, under French colours, from the Sherboro, with three hundred slaves on board, bound to Gua daloupe. According to the provisions of existing treaties with

France, although found thus openly engaged in this flagitious traffic, she cannot be considered a lawful prize, and was consequently released. As by these treaties we are not permitted the right of search, no French slave-ship can be detained by us, or indeed by ships of war of any nation but their own; and as the French national squadron on the coast of Africa, although nearly as large as ours, possesses but little cruizing zeal, the trade is carried on under the white flag, now the tricolor, to an enormous extent. The Portuguese and Spanish slave dealers, fully aware of this immunity, take advantage of the shelter which it affords, and obtain French papers for the ships they employ in the trade. Surely the French Government, which has enacted various laws expressive of its detestation of this inhuman traffic, cannot be aware of the disgraceful extent to which their flag is employed for its protection, or they would voluntarily grant the right of search and capture of all vessels found with slaves on board. But it is the general opinion here that they have never entertained a sincere desire to put an effectual stop to the odious traffic.

The commander of the Plumper came on board, and put us in possession of the proceedings of the squadron, and the *on dits* of the colony. He told us that a few weeks ago he went on service in search of slave vessels up the Rio Pongos, in consequence of which thirty-eight of his crew have been seized with fever and sent to the hospital at Sierra Leone, fourteen of whom died yesterday, and that he expects to hear on his return, from the state of those remaining, that they have almost all shared a similar fate. Upon inquiry, he stated that he took the brig a considerable distance up the river, that she was anchored so close to the shore that her yards almost brushed the trees, and that on the fall of the tide the vapour arising from the slimy ooze on the banks was so dense, that one might, to use a common, but forcible expression, "almost have cut it with a knife." This officer also informed us that the Primrose, Commander Broughton, had captured a large ship, with five hundred and fifty slaves on board, called the "Veloz Passagera," mounting twenty long guns, after a se-

vere action, during which the former had three killed and welve wounded, among whom was the captain; the latter orty-six killed and twenty wounded, ten or twelve of whom lied afterwards. The Conflict has also captured, by neans of her boats, an armed schooner, called the Nympha, with one hundred and sixty-nine slaves, bound to Boa Vista, belonging to Colonel Martinez, abovementioned. Here, too, the action was warm while it lasted, the Conflict's boats having eleven wounded, four severely; the prize fifteen killed and several wounded. It is the interest of the crews of these vessels to defend themselves to the utmost, as they receive no part of their wages, which is from thirty to sixty dollars a month, according to the rank they hold, until their live cargo is safely disembarked at the destined port, when they have a certain number of dollars additional, according to the number of slaves landed alive; and in the event of capture they forfeit every thing. I learn that the persons officially connected with the victualling department and courts of mixed commissions at Sierra Leone, are talking of preparing to depart for the new settlement at Fernando Po. The greatest alarm prevails among them, for they dread change beyond imagination, and consider Sierra Leone as a paradise in point of salubrity compared with their intended place of residence.

30th November. The name of Sierra Leone, or Mountains of the Lion, was given by the Portuguese discoverers in the fifteenth century, to a small peninsular tract of country, situated about the ninth degree of north latitude, and thirteenth and fourteenth of west longitude; bounded to the southward by the Kates river and Sherboro, to the northward by the Sierra Leone river; on the southern bank of which, within five miles of its estuary, is now situated the British colonial settlement called Freetown. This mountainous district is to be seen this morning emerging like a series of azure clouds from the thick brick-dust coloured haze which seems to rest upon the horizon.

We have a very light breeze off the land, so that our ap-

proach to it is not so rapid as we could wish. The thermometer is not higher than eighty degrees, and the heat by no means oppressive. Were it not for the light haze that constantly floats in the atmosphere, not mixing with it, but remaining suspended in it like a thin smoke, or like any spirituous fluid when poured into a glass of water that is motionless, the weather might be considered very fine. A pilot came alongside this afternoon in a small boat pulled by four hands, and was taken on board,—a stout black, six feet high, by name Prince Stober. How he became possessed of such a Germanic appellation, I have not been able to ascertain. His various occupations are not less remarkable than his name is singular, as he, as well as others of the same amphibious tribe, directs the course of vessels into port during the week, and on Sunday pilots souls to heaven, being the pastor of a methodist conventicle; and he seems an intelligent person, very well fitted to instruct his poor countrymen in their religious duties.

CHAPTER II.

1st December. Freetown and its vicinity, from the anchorage which we reached a little after daylight this morning, has a most pleasing appearance, and notwithstanding that its climate is so pernicious to European constitutions, the most prejudiced must grant that the scenery here is magnificently picturesque. The wide confluence of the Sierra Leone river with the sea, resembles a smooth and extensive lagoon, bounded on one side by the low, woody Bullom shore, on the other by the verdant and gentle acclivity on which the town is situated, the back-ground of which, gradually ascending, terminates in a semi-circular range of moderate sized hills, forming a sort of amphitheatre, decorated with lofty trees and richly foliated shrubs; while every spot of the ascent, here and there studded with neat country seats, presents to the delighted eye a picture of the most agreeable character. The town covers a large space of ground; its houses appear from the anchorage like so many cottages ornée, elegantly built, and tastefully painted externally, and interspersed with numerous trees; the streets wide, and—which, by the by, is rather ominous than pleasing—covered with grass, through which lanes are distinguishable, made by the foot passengers. The huts scattered about in the suburbs surrounded with banana, orange, pawpaw, and other fruits, put one in mind of garden summer-houses of the honest Cockney citizens in the neighbourhood of London. But with all that is pleasing to the eye, it is but a painted sepulchre. It is painful to the imagination to conceive that this very exuberance of vegetation is the remote cause of that great destruction of European life, for which the place is so distinguished—contaminating the

surrounding atmosphere with mephitic exhalations by its annual death and putrefaction. On the ridge of an adjacent hill, to the westward of the town, is situated a cluster of mud huts, the humble abode of a number of liberated slaves, and still farther to the westward, on the borders of the river, stands another assemblage of mud edifices, similarly inhabited.—These villages are called Wilberforce and Murray.

I hear to-day that twenty-one of the thirty-eight fever patients sent to the hospital from the Plumper have died, among whom is the assistant surgeon and the clerk; and the others are in such a precarious state, that little hope is entertained of their recovery. The thing does not appear to create any sensation here; it is a matter of such common occurrence, that the subject is seldom spoken of on shore, or only mentioned *en passant*.

Numbers of boats and canoes formed of the pullam, a gigantic species of cotton tree, have paddled alongside to-day, full of black washerwomen, liberated slaves, and Kroumen, all noisily talkative; the women well clothed with cotton garments of various hues; the latter free from any such encumbrance, excepting a piece of cloth that serves the purpose of the "fig leaf small clothes of our progenitor." Some of them, indeed, are *in puris naturalibus*, but the ladies do not appear to be very much shocked at the indecency. Habit is a second nature, it is said, and perhaps blushes are incompatible with a countenance of ebony. They brought for sale bananas, oranges, lemons, and pine-apples. The pines, though not so deliciously flavoured as those of English or West India growth, are nevertheless very excellent, that sixty of them may be had for a dollar, or somewhat less than a penny each.

11th. The fine picturesque appearance which the town assumes from the anchorage is greatly diminished on entering it. It is placed on the side of a hill, situated in the area, or bosom, of the amphitheatre mentioned above. This hill is formed of a primitive brittle rock, that appears chiefly to

consist of sandstone, and a combination of oxygen, having a strong magnetic quality: of this several of the houses are built, but many more are constructed of wood, and all have quadrangular roofs, covered with small pieces of wood, which they call shingles, in place of slates. The iron stone of these, blackened and corroded by the frequent rains, has a very uncouth appearance, although a plentiful aspersion of whitewash appears to be made use of to hide the deformity. The wooden buildings, with chinks in the walls, and uneven boardings, although daubed like the others with colouring matter, and look well at a distance, are only a few degrees superior to the booths of a race course or a fair; besides that they are not lasting, owing to the destructive incursions of a small and very numerous kind of white ant, which the natives call "bug-a-bug." The houses are constructed on the principles of free ventilation: most of them being surrounded with covered galleries, open in front, or numerously perforated with jalouseed windows, or blinds of wicker work, to exclude the sun and allow the air to permeate. Most of these superior kind of buildings are unconnected with each other, being separated by a colony of small huts, inhabited by people of every shade, from strawcolour to perfect jet, generally maroons. These huts are built of twigs wattled together round poles stuck in the ground; the interstices filled with clay, and the roof four-sided and thatched with straw or dry grass. Some of them are likewise formed of planks united edgewise, but such belong to certain of the black aristocracy only. The streets of the town are very wide, placed at right angles, and plentifully supplied with grass and rubbish. The soil is exceedingly hard during the dry season, and the red powder of the oxide adheres most tenaciously to one's nether garments moist with perspiration, daubing them most unsparingly with iron mould. During the rains, I am told, this hard soil becomes so soft and saturated with moisture, that if not very careful, one may step up to the knees in mud in every street of Freetown.

Each house has its garden full of fruit trees of various sorts

peeping over the roofs and garden walls, reminding one of the green luxuriance of an English village in the month of May. A little higher up the hill, overlooking the town, Fort Thornton, the citadel, or principal fort, is situated, with the military hospital behind,—which, by the by, might be in a much more elevated, and therefore more cheerful, cool, and healthy situation; and on the very summit of the hill stands the new barracks, commodious, clean, and well ventilated. A place more eligible for their erection could not be found in the whole neighbourhood. The temperature is usually two or three degrees below that of the town, and although the bay should be perfectly calm, there is almost always in this elevated spot a light and refreshing breeze. The summit of this hill commands the most superb and agreeable prospect imaginable in every direction but one, where the burying-ground presents itself, and the newly turned up mould which covers the recent victims to fever. The beautiful valley separating this from the semicircular range of woody hills in the back ground, forming a line of demarcation between the vicinity of Freetown and all that may be disagreeable to the eye beyond; the little villas peeping through the woods in rural modesty; the wide spreading town at our feet, embowered in trees; its spacious streets full of moving forms, dark, to be sure, but replete with life and bustle; and the still, expansive estuary, unruffled by a breath, bearing on its smooth surface ships of various size and structure, pilgrim specks from "regions most remote,"—constitute an assemblage of objects highly pleasing to the eye, and gratifying to the imagination. "All the grateful country breathes delight." If we could but add with Gay,

Here blooming health exerts her gentle reign,

the agreeable picture would be complete, but, merged in its fatal climate, all the beauties of the country are lost.

Freetown properly consists of several districts connected with each other by intervening huts, of which the residences

of our countrymen form a straggling sort of nucleus. The inhabitants are composed, besides Europeans, of Nova Scotia settlers, Maroons from Jamaica, discharged soldiers of the West India regiments and royal African corps, natives, and liberated Africans; and each of these districts receives its name from the principal body of its inhabitants,—such as Settler Town, Maroon Town, Soldier or Gibraltar Town, Jaloff Town, and so on. The greater number of the respectable inhabitants have low wooden boxes, somewhat resembling pigsties, placed outside of the doors of their dwelling and storehouses, in which a Krouman or negro keeps watch during the night. These are remarkable objects in the street, and puzzle one not a little to guess their particular use. These transportable boxes are obtained from slave vessels, in which they are placed on the upper deck for the use of the captain and mate, when the cabin, hold, and every portion of spare room, is occupied by their living cargo. There is no scarcity of shops or "stores," as they are called, where almost every article of English manufacture may be had. The town is also possessed of one solitary inn, and two billiard tables,—one at the inn, and a private one maintained by a few subscribers, whose complaisance enables casual visiters like ourselves to have free access to it at all times.

Numbers of Foulahs, Serawoolahs, and Mandingoes, tall, slender made, but athletic, and intelligent looking men, are seen walking. or sitting in groups about the streets, dressed in long loose coarse blue and white robes, having the arms and legs bare; their heads covered with a small red or white woolen or cotton cap; their hair platted in numerous cords, nearly as thick as the little finger, and hanging round the head; with sandals on their feet; and their arms and necks, and, in some instances, their ancles, loaded with numerous fetishes,*—grisgris, as they call them, or charms. These are mere scraps of paper, written in Arabic characters, (pieces of the Koran, and placed in small leather bags or boxes, which

* From the Portuguese word Feitoço, witchcraft.

are fastened round the arm above the elbow, or round the neck, with straps of the same material, and resembling so many tobacco pouches. They have all muskets, bows, and arrows; some of them long sabres or curved knives, resembling creeses. The Foulahs and Serawoolahs bring gold from the interior in large rough rings, which they barter for articles of dress, gunpowder, &c. The Madingoes trade chiefly in rice and bullocks. One day lately, a number of these men, accompanied by a patriarchal chief called Suttapha, or Mustapha, came on board to see the frigate. They inspected her in the most minute way; some of them extending their examination even to the main-top. That which seemed to afford them the greatest amusement, was the cabin bell; the cord attached to which, in their examination of every thing, one of them chanced to pull, and hearing the effect, and not knowing from whence the sound came, every one had a pull in turn, and seemed highly tickled with the constant tinkle which their incessant tugs produced. The arrogance, cunning, and open perfidy of the gold trader is surprising. It has been the practice with the European merchants to employ a friendly Foulah, or Mandingo, to look out for the arrival of these people from the interior, and endeavour to prevail on them to sell the gold which they have brought to the merchant in whose confidence he is. While the negociation is pending, which the traders take care to protract as long as possible, they live at the expense of the merchant, who has to provide them with a house, cooking utensils, mats to sleep on, and provisions. At length, after some weeks, if well treated, a bargain is struck; but if any thing displeases them—if they fancy that they are not sufficiently well treated, they go to some one else, live with him another week or two, and perhaps play him a similar trick. From having been thus too much indulged, through the ill-judged rivalry and over-anxious cupidity of the merchants, they have become so proud and haughty, that they are generally able to dictate their own terms, which the original bargainer will rather submit to than suffer another to obtain the gold.

One thing strikingly remarkable in Freetown, is the total absence of beasts of burden, or carriages of any sort. To be sure, a milch cow is seen here and there grazing in the middle of the street, and a few goats, dogs, pigs, and poultry; and every respectable person keeps his own riding horse, or gig, (in lending which, by the by, they are extremely liberal to visitors;) but with these exceptions, I have never seen a domestic or working animal, or a carriage of any sort. The duties of the camel, horse, ox, mule, and ass, seem to be performed almost entirely by the individual or combined labour of our own species, and chiefly by the Africans recently liberated, who are to be seen in great numbers about the streets, almost in a state of nudity. I observed parties of these men, lately manumitted, dragging huge stones on low-wheeled trucks, for the purpose of building; others arriving from the country in the evening, where they had been at work, clearing the ground, with hoes and pickaxes on their shoulders, all of them seemingly contented with their employment. Besides these men, parties of convicts, in chains, are constantly employed about any public work that may be going on,—black, as well as white men, who have been condemned for offences committed in the colony.

The female Africans all carry their children behind their backs, rolled in the same body-cloth which covers, from the waist downwards, their own nakedness. The poor little wretch bound with its face to the back of its mother, and an arm and a leg on each side of her, and both these as well as its head exposed to the sun, seems to bear its irksome position, and all the shaking and rough usage it meets with, most philosophically. The market-place is crowded with liberated African females, squatted on the ground, or on mats, with their basket of fruit, nuts, or Chily peppers, displayed before them, and their naked, woolly-headed sable cherubs, released from their dorsal envelope, playing round them, and puckering their little, smooth, chubby visages into every form and degree of satisfaction. They sprawl about the narrow lanes

through the market, scratching up the mud, and wallowing in it like as many black sucking pigs. At one time, in threading my passage through this labyrinth of baskets, something called off my attention, and I accidentally trod rather heavily upon one of these poor little sooty imps, which set up a squeak very much like its sucking prototype; but being accustomed to hard knocks, and much ungentle usage, its grief vanished with that single scream. What with us would have kept the whole house in an uproar for an hour at least, only occupied the short space of a momentary squall, and the little thing brightened again as if nothing had happened, much to my gratification, as I imagined that I must at least have broken some of its ribs. Its mother seemed to think very lightly of the matter.

The market is large and centrically situated, and is held partly on the ground floor of a large unfinished building, intended, I believe, as an Assembly Room, and partly in the open air, surrounded by wooden pailings. At one end is the flesh, at the other the fruit and vegetable markets. The fish market is near the river side, and at a little distance from the others,—the whole filthy in the extreme. As is usual in most markets, the first of the morning is the best time to make purchases. The manumitted slaves, who chiefly supply the markets, arrive then from the different villages within six or eight miles of Freetown, bringing baskets of fruit on their heads, which is so plentiful, that they dispose of the whole load perhaps for sixpence. Part of the fruit and vegetables are, however, brought over from the Bullom shore, supplied by a powerful chief, called Dalla Mahommodou, who also sends numbers of bullocks to be disposed of, and who has also a very principal share in the wood trade of the river. Besides various kinds of fruit, many other articles are placed on the ground for sale: such as pots of palm oil,—a most diabolical mixture of this oil and farina, used as an article of food by the blacks, coarse soap, yams, cassava, half-cleaned rice, green ginger, straw hats, fowls, and tobacco. The beef in

the market is wretched stuff, and the mutton little better, although said to be the finest of the whole coast. The cattle are remarkably small: and all that I have seen are of a dun colour, with erect horns. Poultry and eggs are very small, scarce, and consequently, high priced. Bread and milk we find to be the most expensive of all articles; a small roll, of the value of one penny in England, costing here threepence, and a quart of goat's milk nearly two shillings. The principal fish in the market are bream, gray mullet, garroupa, and rock cod. These are only to be had fresh late in the afternoon, when the fishermen make a point of arriving just in time for dinner. The unremitting din of jarring tongues in this market is most deafening, and the peculiar sickly odour of black humanity, most potent and disagreeable. One might imagine that he had got within the precints of Lucifer and the damned; that he saw all the fraternity of Beelzebub, heard the smothered howls of the tortured, and respired the sulphurous vapours of the Tartarean abyss.

The water of Sierra Leone is excellent, and the supply at all times sufficient for the consumption; but, towards the close of the dry season, it is so much less abundant than usual, that ships are sometimes obliged to supply themselves during the night, that the inhabitants may not be incommoded. It is principally obtained from a large cistern near the Fishmarket.

The currency of Sierra Leone is a strange and inconvenient commixture of Spanish doubloons,—dollars rudely divided into four parts, each of which is called a "cut money,"—and the current silver and copper of England. The cut money appears to be the most common medium of circulation; every thing costs so many "cut moneys."

Amidst all the dialects spoken by the various Negro tribes and inhabitants in the colony, English is the language generally understood and made use of in every degree of imperfection. Poor Quamino, in giving utterance to our civilized

dialect, falls into many diverting errors of style, as well as pronunciation, and our countrymen here seem to think that it is necessary he should not improve in this respect, as they all make use of the same defective and incongruous jargon in speaking to every one of dingy exterior, conceiving, no doubt, that the blacks understand better what is said to them when spoken to in their own broken and imperfect English. The following is a specimen of this peculiar *lingua franca* jargon, which I overheard the other day between a European master and his black servant :—

Master. "Why for you no take book to goberna man?"
Man. "Me no get him, sa."
Master. "Yes you did; you get fum, fum, palaver plenty."
Man. "Me no like him, sa; me get fum fum palaver plenty too much."

Which means,

"Why did you not deliver that note to the governor?"
"You did not give me any note, sir."
"Yes I did; you shall be punished."
"I would rather not, sir; for I have had quite enough of punishment already."

To the westward of Freetown a level damp uncultivated piece of ground, of considerable extent, covered with almost impenetrable jungle, presents itself as a flagrant specimen of deficient circumspection on the part of the colonial government. With the number of liberated Africans imported annually, nothing would appear to be more easy than the draining and clearing of this swampy spot, and the vicinage of mangrove and jungle, so as to impede the formation of those exhalations so destructive to health and life during the rainy months. There is, even at this dry season, frequently suspended over the site of this semi-paludal district, a white, filmy, tenuous haze, so dense in the morning that every thing which it envelopes, although it does not extend so high as the

tops of the trees, is nearly hid from the sight, dispersing or expanding towards the meridian, and gradually collecting and condensating again as the influence of the sun becomes weaker and evening approaches. This can be nothing else than the noxious vapours elicited by the action of the sun's rays from the moist soil and the decaying vegetation.

In reference to this baneful exudation from the earth's surface, the following anecdote of Commodore B——— and Sir Niel Campbell, then Governor of Sierra Leone, related to me by a friend on whose veracity I can implicitly rely, deserves to be recorded. I must premise, however, that it occurred during the rainy season, when these exhalations are much more dense than at present. Sir Neil sent an aid-de-camp on board early one morning to invite the Commodore to breakfast at eight o'clock, who excused himself by saying that he made it an invariable rule on the coast of Africa not to land before ten. The messenger went on shore, and speedily returned with another message from the governor, saying, that as he was very anxious to see the Commodore, he had put off breakfast until ten, and that he had gone to take a ride in the interim. There was no refusing this: and the cautious officer inquired in what direction Sir Niel rode. "To the westward," was the reply. "Then," said he, "I shall perhaps be able to shew you why I do not leave the ship before the day is well advanced." The road which the Governor had taken was at that time nearly parallel with the beach, by King Tom's Point, and only a short distance from it. Commodore B——— took the aid-de-camp to the gangway, and after looking a little time, pointed out to him the Governor's course by his hat and feather, the last of which was distinctly visible, waving over the sheet of mist which covered the ground, himself and his horse being completely enveloped in it. The young soldier expressed great astonishment at the singular phenomenon, and said he was sure that no one on shore was aware of the existence of so dense and dangerous an envelope. Not long after this Sir Neil Campbell fell a victim to the climate.

The habitations of the Krou people, Krou Town as it is called, are, in the direction of this spot, adjoining Freetown, a complete Indian village; the houses formed, like all the huts in the colony, of clay, twigs, and thatch. These men are an emigrant and industrious race, natives of a part of the grain coast, in the neighbourhood of Cape Palmos, about three hundred and fifty or four hundred miles south east of this, who come here for a few years only—let themselves out for hire to ships or as servants on shore—make a little money—return home again, and succeeded by some more of their fortune-pushing countrymen. They are in fact, the Scotsmen of Africa. They are a remarkably strong, active, hardy, and intelligent race of men. Their skin varies from a dark copper colour to black, tattooed about the face, chest, and arms. They are distinguished by a tattooed arrow on each temple, with its point to the eye; and almost all of them have the front teeth of the upper jaw filed to a point, or some portion of each tooth removed, according to the fancy of the wearer, or those who begat him, which gives them a savage appearance. Their only article of dress is a piece of printed cotton cloth round the middle. None of them have their wives and families here; these are left at home under the guardianship of their own relations and the protection of their chief to whom, on returning home, they always carry a present of cloth, muskets, gunpowder, or some article of dress, as a sort of tribute and acknowledgment for his protection. Polygamy is permitted in their own country. They come up to Sierra Leone in canoes of different sizes, but generally return in any merchant vessel that may be going to pass in the vicinity of Cape Palmos; the quantity of goods which they take with them, purchased by their industry, being generally too much for their shallow barks to carry. The passage back is, however, occasionally made in canoes. A tribe called Fishmen, who inhabit the sea coast to the northward of their country, and with whom they have frequent wars, often lie in wait for them on their passage, and rob them; and, if I may believe the Kroumen, who seem to hate these people most cordially, the

most bloody rencounters sometimes takes place between them. Every ship of war, on arriving here, (Freetown,) enters a certain number of these Kroumen over and above her compliment, for the purpose of manning her boats when they may be sent on any service where there is likely to be much exposure to the sun or rain, and to the mephitic exhalations from the soil, such as wooding and watering, so that our unassimilated seamen may be subjected as little as possible to the deleterious influence of the climate. They continue on board the ship until she leaves the station, when they are paid and discharged. One of the number is always considered the chief, or leading man, and is generally rated as a petty officer, the others as ordinary seamen. Sometimes there are two leading men; in that case the second is rated as an able seaman, or has a second class petty officer's rating. They are much attached to the naval service. As the orthography as well as the pronunciation of their original proper names would be, to our tars, matters of incalculably difficult accomplishment, either they or some diverting vagabond on shore has supplied all of them most comical and ridiculous appellations of English construction, by which they appear on the ship's books, instead of the proper names which have been bestowed upon them in their own country. We received upwards of twenty of them on board, chiefly young men, all of them more muscular and athletic, although not generally taller than our own people; some of them perfect models in point of figure, and possessing features rather more prominent and expressive than the generality of Africans. Nearly all of them had been in the navy before, and, like most other Africans, each has his grigri, or fetish, which is commonly the tooth of some wild animal, fastened round the ancle or wrist. The following are a few of their original proper names, with the laughable and absurd cognomina which they brought with them among many others of strange and dubious import:—

Namboe	Jack Ropeyarn.
Tabooa	Jack Fryingpan.
Yiepam	Great Tom.

Woorawa	Peas Soup.
Blattoo	Will Centipede.
Nieca	Jack Neverfear.
Niepa	Jack Toggle.
Ba Sidi	Tom Seedy.
Niaie	Government Packet.

In rowing they have always a song of some sort or other at command, to which they keep time with the oar, sometimes melodious, but usually harsh and untuneful, having generally for its subject something connected with the ship, or the officers, or the duty that is going on, each chanting a subject in turn, while the rest join in the chorus.

Although enemies to the slave trade, these people are complained of by the Europeans on shore for their thievish propensities, and their "resetting" of stolen goods, which, if valuable, they pack off in canoes to their own country long before a hue and cry can be raised, so that few stolen articles of value can be recovered. They encourage the apprenticed slaves to steal from their masters whatever they can lay their hands on, particularly articles of dress, for which they give them some trifling payment, as may be supposed, by no means equivalent to their value.

In Freetown, there are two government schools, on Bell's system, for the education of black children of every race, Maroons, Settlers, and liberated Africans. In the male school there are at present three hundred and eighty-five pupils, divided into ten classes; in the female school two hundred and sixty-four, into eight classes. The boys are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic only,—the girls, besides these, are instructed in needle-work. Every attention seems to be paid to their instruction: and, besides being remarkably clean, neatly dressed, and well-behaved, the progress they have made in these rudimental branches of education deserves the highest praise. I examined several classes in each school, and studiously compared the acquirements of the liberated African with

the other children. There was no perceptible difference. The lights and shades seemed to bear much the same proportion among them, as among the children of our own labouring classes at home. For the age of these children, their progress under the system of education adopted, seemed to be very rapid. With the infant establishments, fast gaining ground at home, and other improved methods of educating youth,—"of teaching the young idea how to shoot," the high road to knowledge is now so divested of asperities, and, as it were, "Macadamized," that much ought necessarily to be expected from the rising generation, even of the sadly traduced blacks. A child now, before it can well utter its first monosyllables, is made to receive instruction, both physical and moral; and sundry rude applications of birch or leather *a posteriori* in the old school militant, have given way to coaxing and kindness in the new method of discipline, which, I think, for the sake of contradistinction, may certainly be called the school mellifluent. In the case of the school at Freetown, however, this system appears to work well.

Freetown church, situated near the middle of the town, after having cost government an enormous sum of money, (from £50,500 to £80,000 I hear,) has at length been discovered to be too large, and is at present undergoing material alterations, so as to reduce its capacity. It is, therefore, no longer a market-place, as Lander states it to have been in his Records of Clapperton, "where buyers and sellers were indecently disputing and wrangling," There is, however. no scarcity of Methodist chapels and meeting-houses in the place; and almost all the villages possess some residents attached to the Church Missionary Society, who, with the managers and submanagers, perform the municipal duties of each, and who, by their strenuous exertions in the cause of morality and religion, have all along been extremely unpopular among the dissolute Europeans, who again affirm that their salacity exceeds all bounds, and that their religion is maintained merely in its trappings, which they doff at pleasure. A strong instance of moral turpitude has recently occurred among these men,

which has caused no inconsiderable degree of exultation to their lay brethren, whose peccadilloes they sometimes magnify into heinous offences, and who, consequently, think and speak as most other men of "carnal minds" would do under similar circumstances.

"The *office* of a clergyman," say they, "must at all times command respect, and we are induced to respect the *man*, when his demeanour is compatible with the office, and his life irreproachable. But when a parson, merely because he is a parson, ventures to assume any arrogant degree of superiority over his lay brethren, and holds them up for petty offences and imaginary misbehaviour, as stained and branded with the mark of the Beast, as if he himself were spotless, he must, of course, expect to meet with the ridicule, the pity, and contempt, which such a supercilious, unwarrantable, and unchristianlike assumption deserves, let his conduct in other respects be ever so irreprehensible in our eyes. It is the duty of a clergyman to remind us of our faults, and to tell us to correct them, and how to do so; but it is a weakness in the poor man to think himself, as he often does, in any way better or superior, because it is part of the duties attached to his holy office to do so. Such conduct must at all times appear a most farcical superlation of his own professed excellence, and will always meet with disgust and contempt from the unreclaimed and ungodly, and compassion from his more sensible brethren; the former of whom are very naturally inclined to exclaim, like a certain graceless toper, of sack-drinking notoriety, 'Because thou art virtuous, shall there be no more cakes and ale?'" The missionaries have, until the occurrence in question, superintended the instruction of the liberated Africans located in the different villages in the Peninsula. During the week, they assemble the children in the churches, and teach them to read and write, and to perform various religious exercises, such as singing church melodies, &c. They have, of course, access to every house; and in the mentally debased condition of the newly imported Africans, virtuous scruples are so rare among them, that the vicious will find few obstacles to the

gratification of any immoral propensity, particularly when it is masked by religion. Mr. D———, "the fallen star" alluded to, was in the daily practice of inculcating moral and religious instruction upon the minds of children, as well as those more advanced in life. His wife and family were living with him in the town when the criminal circumstance alluded to took place,—namely the seduction of a young English female, who speedily disclosed his villainy. Had it been an African, the occurrence would never have been discovered; and where the tendency to crime has been so manifested, and the facilities of commission so extensive, to what conclusion will a consideration of all the circumstances naturally tend? On the affair being discovered, he threw up his situation; and what makes the matter still more extraordinary, he was countenanced by his brethren, several of whom refused to perform their duties in the schools any longer. The world would be inclined to conclude from this, that they are equally guilty, and afraid of an officially instituted inquiry, and the criminal discoveries to which such an inquiry might possibly lead. But among the most immaculate there will be occasional slips, and, for all this, there are many good and valuable men among them.

During our stay here, among other liberated African villages, I visited Kissey, situated about four miles to the eastward of Freetown, on the side of a gentle acclivity, about a mile from the river side. There is an excellent road to this village, and Wellington, situated a little farther on, winding round the base of those lofty mountains behind Freetown, here still embellished with rich foliage, and diversified with valleys and ravines, clothed in the gayest manner imaginable. On the left hand, the wide, still, and expansive river is seen at a little distance, slowly stealing towards the sea. All between the road and its sloping bank is covered with long grass, yellow with the sun, appearing like ripe corn, waving in the gentle breeze, interspersed with groves and solitary trees, and the straggling, thatched huts of the manumitted slaves. The base of the hills on the right is embraced by se-

veral European villas and farms, well laid out, and ornamented with hedgerows of pine apple plants, which grow wild here in every direction; and close to the road, on both sides, throughout its whole extent, the numerous cottages are placed, each surrounded by a piece of well cultivated ground, full of cassada, cocoa plants and fruit trees, and hedged in, and ornamented with several kinds of creeping plants,—the residences of liberated Africans, who have been some time in the colony. About two miles from Freetown, between this road and the river, there is a large piece of ground laid out as a race-course, for the annual amusement of the sporting heroes of the colony, but occupied every evening at this season by the European Ascii, who ride or drive to this spot towards sunset, and lounge about in the cool, refreshing sea breeze, for an hour or two before dinner. All are on the *qui vive* at present, as the races take place a few days after Christmas, and nothing is talked of but training, betting, and horse flesh.—Where there are so few bright incidents to illuminate the gloomy aspect of time as at Sierra Leone, a period of excitement like this is naturally looked forward to with anxious satisfaction. Every one is discussing the merits of his own, or some other steed, and unacquainted as the Leonese must be with the systematic insidiæ of the turf, I can learn there is not a little jockeying going forward by the "knowing ones," even here. The horses, most of which are brought from the Gambia, are very small, and generally in bad condition—something of the same breed as Don Quixote's mare. None are thorough bred, and few are of any value. As they are all kept for the common purposes of riding or driving, and none exclusively for the turf, we ought not to ridicule the hack-like appearance of those about to be entered, nor the zeal which prompts the lieges to speak of them with admiration, because they are the best; and we know that all things—horses as well as men—are measured by comparison; but a technical description of the Sierra Leone stud, to which I am incompetent, would, I have no doubt, afford no small diversion to the connoisseurs of Ascot and Newmarket.

On approaching Kissey, the only striking objects which present themselves are the church, a large unoccupied government house, and two or three other civilized looking buildings, residences of the liberated African manager, and a few missionary assistants. All the rest has the appearance of a complete Indian village, the huts, peeping through groves of plantain and banana trees, formed of poles stuck in the ground, interwoven with twigs of mangrove, after the manner of a basket, the crevices filled up with clay, and the roof thatched with rank meadow grass. They are separated from each other by the pieces of ground allotted to each inhabitant, and by streets of respectable width; and consequently, although the whole contain only from eight hundred to one thousand persons, they are scattered over a very considerable extent of surface. All the liberated African villages in the colony are very similar in appearance. Of these, Regent's Town, in the mountain district, about three miles from this, is considered the finest. In the yard attached to the government house, there is a range of low buildings appropriated to the purposes of an hospital, for the reception of manumitted slaves, at present under the superintendence of the colonial surgeon.—Here all cases of difficulty and danger are sent from the other villages; yet, although the patients appear to be judiciously treated, and cleanliness strictly attended to, humanity obliges me to say, that the place is, both from its size and situation, altogether ill adapted for the purposes of an hospital. It consists of three very small apartments on the ground floor, one of which is appropriated to females, the care of whom is consigned to female nurses. Into these are huddled seventy-nine sick persons; and I was told that there had been occasionally as many as one hundred and fifty, afflicted with various diseases; for it would be both a useless and difficult matter, where the accommodation is so scanty, to attempt any separation or classification of the cases. But every thing appears to be done for their comfort, so far as the limited accommodation will allow; and it is for the colonial government to appoint a receptacle, of which there is no scarcity, at least in Freetown,

(and there can be no very cogent reason against this being the site of the hospital, but there is a strong argument in favour of it, as the superintending surgeon resides there,) more suited to the wants and necessities of our afflicted fellow-creatures, although they are black and wretched. The diseases in the hospital were chiefly frightful phagedenic ulcers, dropsy, tabes, and craw-craw,—an eruptive complaint, of the nature of an inveterate itch, forming scabs, somewhat resembling those of tinea, and affecting the skin about the elbow and knee joints principally. Some of the poor patients were so much emaciated, as to make it really a matter of surprise that objects so deplorable could still retain life. Two females, who had been slaves on board the Nympha, when captured lately by the boats of the Conflict, were among the number. They had accidentally been severely wounded during the scuffle which ensued on boarding.

I cannot help shuddering when I think of the dreadful and undeserved calamities, which are the bitter inheritance of these poor, inoffensive, suffering, and degraded blacks. At a short distance from Kissey, near the river side, a few huts have been erected, and surrounded with a wall, (not yet completed,) intended as a lazaretto, for the reception of all cases of an infectious nature, brought to the colony in newly captured slave ships, and for the temporary residence of the whole living cargo, should any epidemic prevail among them. Vessels may anchor near the spot, and land their unhappy inmates without difficulty.

In one of my excursions to this village, I dined with the government surveyor, who has "pitched his tent" here for a short time, being employed in completing an elaborate survey of the whole colony; and I may take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the civil endeavors and hospitality which we have met with at the hands of several of our countrymen in Sierra Leone. It is our own fault if we do not take advantage of their numerous invitations. Every endeavour is made to afford us some means of passing the time, and dissipating

the ennui which weighs upon our spirits, in this vapid and enervating climate; for, although the present is the most healthy throughout the year, (August being considered the most unhealthy,) yet the debilitating atmospheric influence on mind as well as body, is sufficiently perceptible in the great disinclination to exertion of any sort; and in the peculiar sense of weakness in the knees,—general lassitude and weariness in the legs, without exertion, almost amounting to pain, with which every one is well conversant, who has resided for a short time in this region of pestilence and death. Unless when the wind blows from the eastward, called the harmattan—a dry, cold, parching breeze, usually lasting two or three days—the air is always highly charged with moisture; a very heavy dew generally falls at night; every thing becomes mouldy, and smells musty, and salt particularly indicates the damp saturity of the atmosphere, by becoming a moist and viscous paste. The violent changes in the condition of animated nature, as well as inanimate matter, effected by these atmospheric vicissitudes in the dry season, joined with intense solar heat, must be eminently injurious to every constitution not habituated to their influence,—to say nothing of the still more pernicious effects produced during the almost incessant rains between May and October.

During my visits to Kissey, I occasionally entered the church,—a large unfinished building, capable of containing nearly one thousand persons, while the negro children were singing at the pitch of their shrill voices, a diurnal song of praise, superintended by a black missionary assistant, belonging to the village. When I entered, they, of course, all looked round and smiled, but continued, with open mouths and teeth of ivory, to scream their canticle to the end of the verse, when all was hush, and, at a given signal from the teacher, a hundred little voices squeaked "Good evening, sir," repeating the salutation two or three times. As my visits were always accidental, the children were, of course, quite unprepared; and I cannot speak too highly of the progress they appeared to have made in reading and writing—of their clean and neat

appearance, and the intelligent smiles of health, pleasure, and curiosity, that beamed from every countenance. In the discipline of these village schools, however, so far as I could learn, there is too much time lost in singing psalms and hymns, the greater part of the day being passed in this exercise.

The view from the upper part of the rising ground on which Kissey is situated, embraces some beautiful and striking objects. The Lion mountains are just above us, clad with trees; the wide spreading village lies at our feet, adorned with every green plant which the country produces: beyond this, the river expands—a placid, silvery stream—the meanderings of which are to be seen, with its low, variegated islands, and the flat and woody Bullom shore, skirting its northern bank, as far as the eye can reach. At present, there are no fewer than fifteen or twenty ships in this, the Mellacorree and Scarcies rivers, embarking cargoes of timber for England, and almost every week adding one or two to the number. The trade of the colony employs about fifty thousand tons of shipping annually. Since the suppression of the slave trade in these rivers, that system of vassalage and enlistment, under the banner of a chief, which was so necessary for personal protection during its continuance, has ceased to exist; and the sun of freedom having poured his benignant and fertilizing influence on the desecrated soil, industry has been fostered, and every description of improvement has made rapid progress among the native tribes, in the vicinity. The wood trade commenced in 1816, under the auspices of Mr. M'Cormack, a respectable merchant of Freetown, who, by much labour and perseverance, taught the native Bulloms and Timmannees to cut down the stately, ancient monarchs of the forest, and prepare them for transportation to another land.

The untaught savages at first laughed at him, and even the Europeans at Freetown considered his attempt as a wild scheme; and nothing but the greatest exertions could have overcome the difficulties he had to encounter in the prejudices of the natives, the want of beasts of burden, of carriages,

or roads of any sort, by which to convey the trees to the river side. Perseverance, however, surmounted every obstacle and the timber trade of this colony has so rapidly increased, that the annual duties on the importation of it alone amount to a very considerable sum, I believe about £20,000. The wood, which is commonly called African oak or teak, from the resemblance it bears to them, although it is in some measure different from both, is now floated down the river in rafts, and deposited in factories, as they are called, or storehouses, erected in convenient places on the different islands, or on the main, to be in readiness for embarkation. Vessels, previous to going up the Sierra Leone river to take in a cargo, discharge their ballast at a spot near the Bullom shore, a little above Freetown, called from this the ballast ground. Their stay up the different rivers is sometimes longer than perhaps there is any occasion for, in consequence of which the crews suffer dreadfully from fevers of the most violent and irremediable nature. There is at this moment (22d Dec.) a bark in the Mellacorree whose decks have been completely swept by a pestilential fever, leaving not a soul alive on board. Speaking of this, I may finish the sad history of the people belonging to his Majesty's brig Plumper: Only eleven of the thirty-eight have survived, and these are so enfeebled and emaciated, that their restoration to pristine health and vigour must be very far distant; and as their health can never be re-established in this climate, they are to be sent to England by the first ship. I frequently visited those remaining alive after our arrival at Sierra Leone. They all laboured under the usual symptoms of that disease vulgarly called yellow fever, as it appears on this coast, *i. e.* of a more typhoid form than the West India disease. There are, no doubt, shades of difference between this and the scourge of the Antilles, but I believe them to be essentially the same. The mercurial treatment was adopted in all the above cases, and the potent drug was most unsparingly poured into the system in every shape. The final result affords a lamentable but decisive illustration of the inefficacy of mercury as the only remedial agent upon

which reliance can be placed in this disease; but strange as it may appear, with even this glaring instance of failure before their eyes, several of the medical men here, from some unaccountable fatuity, continue to practise the same treatment, introducing large quantities of mercury into the system, and upon this placing their sole dependence. Upon what principle the mercurial practitioners make use of their favourite nostrum, I have not been able to ascertain. All they can say in favour of it is, that when salivation takes place, the fever abates; but this is not the fact, for I observed in several of those cases which terminated fatally, that the mercury occasioned a pretty considerable salivary discharge, that it generally ceased after a short time, and that, in all, the mercurial action on the system was perceptible by soreness of the mouth, fœtor of the breath, ulceration of the gums, and, in some, by extensive sloughing. In one case the bloated and œdematous tumefaction of the face and head from this cause was so excessive, that scarcely a lineament of the "human face divine" could be traced. He, of course, died. But they also aver, that although the mouth is affected, unless there is a *profuse* salivary discharge for some time, no salutary effect can be hoped for. This, of itself, is a sufficient comment on the inefficacy, I would say mischievousness, of the practice. If the mouth is very sore, and the breath tainted, after a continued use of mercury, surely it is a proof that the system is charged with it. If it is to exert any salutary influence over the disease, it ought to exhibit itself now. The absence of salivation only shews that the vital powers are singularly torpid or debilitated. The occurrence of salivation only indicates that the powers of life are still capable of exerting a healthy action; and what can be more likely to destroy this capability than the strong sedative property of mercury? I have not the slightest doubt that it did so in those cases, where salivation was established and subsequently ceased,—to say nothing of its destructive effects in those where the system was powerfully influenced by it without any salivary discharge resulting, In destroying the syphilitic poison by mercury, no me-

dical person ever thinks of any other indication that the system is sufficiently affected by the medicine, than that of the gums being slightly tender. A man would be considered mad who had recourse to the obsolete practice of producing copious salivation for this purpose, of keeping the unfortunate patient's tongue hanging out of his month for a fortnight, as was the practice in the old school. As a purgative I think calomel is to be preferred generally above all others,—but only as a purgative.

No individual unconnected with the Plumper was seized with the disease, and as no precaution was taken to prevent communication, we must naturally conclude that, in this instance at least, it was not of a contagious nature. So much for therapeuticks.

Temperance in this climate is imperatively necessary. Abstemiousness and excess are alike injurious. In imitation of Sir William Temple, every man ought to limit himself to three glasses of wine during dinner,—viz. "one for himself, one for his friends, and one for his enemies," and refect from food as little complicated as possible. It is most necessary to guard against repletion, but if one is determined to gorge himself, let it be from a single dish. If from a variety, he only aids the undertaker by driving so many nails in his coffin. Temperance, regularity of the bowels, and a cold shower bath,—to wit, two or three buckets of salt water thrown over the body, morning and evening—will do more to preserve health in this climate than all other precautions put together.

By the by, musquitoes, these most annoying of all the multifarious pests of tropical climates, are by no means numerous at Sierra Leone. The colonists of the Gambia boast of the superiority which their climate possesses over that of Freetown. The Sierra Leonese can only brag of having fewer musquitoes. "That is easily accounted for," say the men of Bathurst, "the climate of Sierra Leone is so bad that nothing can live in it, not even a musquito."

24th December.—We left Sierra Leone to-day, to cruize off

the river Gallinas, a slave mart, about one hundred miles to the southward, in search of vessels engaged in the slave trade; and returned on the 17th of January, 1831, after encountering some smart tornadoes,* accompanied with very heavy thunder and lightning, so close to the ship that the flash and report were synchronous, like the repeated discharges of heavy artillery, the ship trembling under the violence of each rapidly succeeding shock. Several waterspouts passed very close to us, and the rain fell in complete torrents. During the cruise, we met with several vessels equipped for the embarkation of slaves, but having none on board we could not legally detain them. They were in general standing off and on to the land, until their cargo should be collected, which is done by an agent on shore, who, as the slaves arrive, places them in a large shed, or factory, as it is called, where they are penned up like so many cattle. These vessels have often to remain for several weeks, before the number which they are capable of taking on board can be obtained. When this is done they run in-shore towards evening, seldom anchoring; and in the course of an hour or two, every thing being previously prepared, they embark their living cargo with the assistance of large canoes, when they immediately make all sail, are generally many miles from land before daybreak. A few days after leaving Sierra Leone, we met the Plumper, with a Spanish schooner of one hundred and eighty tons, and five hundred and four slaves, taken on board at the river Gallinas, which she had just captured.

Having retraced our steps to Sierra Leone, I shall resume my observations on whatever appears worthy of notice. The liberated African yard, depot for stores, and the jail, are placed nearly contiguous to each other at the west end of Freetown. The latter is a large unvarnished pile of stone, several stories high, surrounded by a lofty wall. It is the largest as well as the most prominent building in the town, a matter somewhat inauspicious. There are at present no fewer than twenty-eight persons in jail, awaiting trial at the ensuing sessions,

* From the Portuguese word Travado, a thunder-storm.

accused of decoying the recently liberated Africans from home, and selling them to persons engaged in the slave trade. Most of these inhuman villains are manumitted slaves themselves, and in several instances relations or countrymen of their unfortunate victims.

In the colony of Sierra Leone, founded expressly for the suppression of the slave trade, on which such enormous sums have been expended, and so many valuable lives sacrificed, it will hardly be credited that numerous instances have been found of persons deeply engaged in this diabolical traffic,—men holding, in some instances, respectable stations, and having the outward appearance of respectability; and that vessels have been fitted up by residents of the colony, destined to carry it on in the rivers adjacent to the Peninsula.* To what extent this most atrocious practice has been carried on in the colony, or at what period it commenced, has not hitherto been ascertained, as there are no very strict parochial regulations, and consequently little or no attention paid to the registration of deaths and removals; but from facts which have recently come to light, it is conjectured that the crime has been perpetrated for a long time with peculiar enormity, and to an extent almost exceeding belief. The following are a few of the facts alluded to:—A schoolmaster has already been tried for selling some of his pupils. By his Majesty's brig Plumper, lately arrived from the river Pongos, I have learned that there are upwards of a hundred Africans, recently liberated and located at Sierra Leone, who have been kidnapped from the colony, now detained in the vicinity of that river, in readiness to be reshipped and again subjected to all the horrors of a slave hold.

The factory where these unfortunate beings are lodged is under the superintendence of a degenerate Englishman, named Joseph, whom the authorities have been for some time endeavouring to seize and bring to justice, but without success. When the Plumper was in the above river, a female slave

* Vide Judge Jeffcott's charge to the Grand Jury, Sierra Leone, June, 1830.

made her escape from the factory, and rushed into one of the boats which had just landed, begging to be taken on board. No persuasion could induce the unhappy being to leave the boat, and humanity at length induced the officer to take her on board the brig, where she was treated kindly, and eventually brought back to Sierra Leone. About the beginning of December, his Majesty's ship Favourite boarded a vessel under French colours full of slaves, several of whom spoke a little English, and were, no doubt, persons who had been liberated and settled at that colony.

The Conflict gun-brig brought to Sierra Leone, on the 17th December, a French schooner with fifty-one slaves on board, two of whom claimed the protection of the boarding officer, having been kidnapped from Regent's Town, one of the liberated African villages in this colony. The two slaves were landed here, and the vessel taken to the French authorities at Goree.

An officer on board this frigate, who has been employed on the coast for several years, tells me that he, not long ago, captured a slave vessel, in which there was an unfortunate individual who had been kidnapped from the colony three times before, and liberated as often, owing to the different vessels in which he was embarked having been, unfortunately for him, captured by his Majesty's ships Brazen, Maidstone, and Esk. Thus it appears that the practice of slave-stealing in the colony is of long standing, as it is upwards of five years since the first of those vessels left the station. The following are a few of the circumstances connected with this nefarious entrapping of our fellow-creatures for the base purpose of again selling them into slavery, which have come to my knowledge:—By an application, any person in the colony of respectable appearance may have several liberated African children apprenticed to him for a certain number of years on paying a trifling sum,—the price of indenture, which amounts to ten shillings, and stipulating to feed and clothe them during the period of their apprenticeship. These children have frequently disap-

peared, and no satisfactory account given of them. It is found that they have generally been purchased from their masters by the Mandingoes for about £5, and by them again sold to regular slave agents, who are engaged to collect cargoes for vessels lying in the rivers, adjacent to the Peninsula.

The manumitted slaves frequently visit Freetown in search of employment, when the emissaries of these traders in human flesh take care to throw themselves in the way of these unsuspecting people, and tell them that they will endeavour to obtain employment for them. Under this promise, they inveigle them down to Pirate's Bay, or Cockle Bay,—to the westward of the town,—where the slave dealers have canoes in readiness, on board of which they are placed, carried over to the Bullom shore, and thence to the nearest river for embarkation. Children have been entrapped even during the day at Freetown, and taken to houses, where they have been kept prisoners for some time, but being well treated, have at length been induced to accompany their jailor across the river, when they were immediately sold. At present there are not more than seventeen or eighteen thousand liberated Africans in the colony, although the chief justice at the last sessions stated, in his charge to the grand jury, that there had been twenty-two thousand of these people imported during the last ten years. This decrease, he said, did not arise from any disproportion in the number of births to that of deaths; the proportion of the former being in 1829 as seven to one of the latter. Judging from this ratio, and allowing for casualties, there ought to have been an increase of one half upon the whole. This falling off can therefore be attributed to nothing else, mortifying as the fact must be, but to the cupidity of those infamous wretches in the colony, who have so long with impunity trafficked in the blood of their fellow-creatures.

After the many millions sterling which this colony has cost the mother country, established by her with the sole view of receiving, sheltering, and protecting all unhappy Africans who might be released by her humane exertions from the horrors of slavery, it is truly humiliating to think how very unsuc

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the new comers, they are generally willing to afford them both shelter and assistance. Sometimes they are dispersed among the different villages, instead of being located in one spot. During the first six months after their arrival in the colony, they are fed and clothed by government, each receiving for this purpose twopence per diem, which is found quite adequate to their wants; and after having completed the erection of their huts, which it takes but a short time to accomplish, they are employed at any public works that may be going forward, being permitted, during part of the six months, to cultivate the piece of ground allotted to them; the assistant superintendent of liberated Africans, before leaving them entirely to their own guidance, supplying them, from an extensive depot or store kept for that purpose, situated in close proximity to the slave yard, with articles of dress and cooking utensils, together with a quantity of esculent seeds and plants, such as Indian corn and cassada, to rear for their future support. They are all much gratified on receiving these necessaries, considering themselves enriched.

The articles at present supplied to each male emancipated slave on his location cost about £1, 10s. which, together with his six months' allowance of twopence a-day, make the whole of the mere personal expense of each male adult to his Majesty's government amount to about £3. The daily allowance is, of course, extended in the cases of persons who from age or infirmity are incapable of supporting themselves. Females receive twopence a-day for three months only, and as many of the children as possible above a certain age, on condemnation of the vessel, are apprenticed out, as has been all ready stated, to persons of respectable appearance in the colony. With the exception of those negroes recently arrived, who from the excessive crowding, and the bad quality and scantiness of the food and water, are almost always filthy, emaciated, and covered with disease, the manumitted slaves appear in general to be clean in their persons, sleek and well fed, and very well satisfied with their condition. After a short stay in the colony, the industrious are occasionally permitted

to cultivate patches of waste land in the country besides their own allotted piece of ground, with the understanding that their occupation of the former shall be temporary. By selling the produce of this they are enabled to obtain many of the comforts and a few of the luxuries enjoyed by their European neighbours. Some idea may be formed of the actual condition of these people from a short description of Murray Town, a village two or three miles west of Freetown, erected in April, 1829, and peopled with three hundred and twenty-six Africans just imported, placed here under the management of a discharged black soldier of the Royal African Corps. It comprises four wide streets—the huts ranged on each side, and separated from each other by pieces of cultivated ground. Each hut is formed in the following manner:—Poles about ten or twelve feet along are stuck deep in the ground, about a foot and a half apart, in the form of a square of twelve or fourteen feet, leaving vacant spaces for one or two windows and two doors of common size; one in front, and the other behind. Round these poles, to the height of six feet, dried twigs are wattled so as perfectly to resemble a coarse basket. The outside of this is plastered over with red clay, and the roof made quadrilateral, peaked, and thatched with long rye grass. The floor is the bare ground unpaved and unboarded, and in most of them a clay wall is run up so as to form two apartments, and thus the house is finished. The situation of the windows is, in many of them, neither supplied with glass or shutters: the weather is so hot they want neither. I have always made it a practice to enter these humble dwellings and converse with the inhabitants, who are very thankful for any attention shown to them by a white person. They seem to like very much to be taken notice of, and spoken to. "How do you do to-day, Maame?" is always answered with a "tankee, Daade," accompanied with a half curtsy and many smiles of satisfaction. I observed during these visits, that the furniture of the houses in this town in general consisted of a cane or bamboo sofa or bed place, with cane mats or round clumps of wood to sit on in room of chairs;

a few plates, bowls, calabashes, wooden spoons and several cast-iron pots and kettles. In some of the houses there were even small mirrors to be seen, and several articles of finery and dress hung up. In most of them there was a bin of cocoas, besides numerous heads of Indian corn strung together, and hung up to dry, baskets of cassada, which several of the inhabitants were cleaning and pounding into tapioca, and calavances, all ready for market. The huts have no chimney, and the burning log is placed in the middle of the floor, and the smoke allowed to find its escape where it may. In the vicinity of this little village the ground is thoroughly cleared and well cultivated. Let it not be forgotten that these people have been established barely two years. Those who have been longer in the colony are in proportion better provided with necessaries and comforts.

A great many of the liberated Africans are employed as labourers in the wood trade of the river, receiving five dollars a-month as wages. Many more have been taught to employ themselves as artisans, and several are engaged daily as abourers in Freetown, and in the different villages of the Peninsula. From all that I have observed, there appears to be no lack of industry among those who have been some time in the colony, and little can be expected for a considerable period from men just escaped to light and liberty, from the dreadful privations of a slave hold. They are acute and active in bargaining, and they do not appear to be by any means deficient in intelligence. It is unfair to take, as a criterion of the natural abilities of the liberated African, the apparent stupidity of those who have been imported at an advanced age. We all know how difficult it is, even among ourselves, to learn or improve after a certain period of life, and to get rid of bad habits which have grown with us. How much more difficult must it be to do this, and also to acquire new notions and habits at an advanced period of life, where no ray of light had ever shone upon the mind, where the habits were savage, and where the only ideas which the individuals possessed did not extend farther than his actual wants and necessities!

It is among the children of these people brought up in the colony, that their mental capacity is to be judged of; and the children in the Government schools at Freetown, as well as in those of the villages, appeared to me to be equal in intelligence and acquirements to European children of the same age. The liberated Africans have not certainly made that progress in civilization which might have been expected, when we consider the trouble that has been taken and the money that has been lavished for this purpose by the mother country; but this is not attributable to any defect of natural ability among them, but to a variety of contingent circumstances, among which not the least obvious is the continued importation of their countrymen into the colony, whose barbarous habits they have, in some measure, been weaned from, but to which from early association, they will naturally be prone to recur on observing them practised by the new comers, for whom, as countrymen, they must feel a strong attachment, and with whom, speaking the same language, and having recently left their own parental land and much regretted homes, they must feel the strongest inclination to associate. Another cause of their tardy improvement may have been the frequent change, by death or otherwise, of governors and superintendents, and the adoption of different methods of management, or perhaps mismanagement, consequent upon these changes. Persons unacquainted with the interests of any settlement, and who have no local experience of the country and its inhabitants, must be evidently unfit to direct and command there. The practice of sending such persons from England for this purpose has not certainly tended to promote the interests of the colony, or the amelioration of its facitious inhabitants. The want of capital and encouragement to cultivate articles of tropical produce, such as coffee, cotton, &c., which would find a market out of the colony, probably also tends to throw a a damp on their industry. For of what use would it be to rear more cocoas, yams, and cassava than they can make use of themselves and dispose of in the colony, when, as these are articles which cannot be exported, they must rot on their

hands. Besides these causes of the tardy progress of civilization, it does really seem to me that the superintendence of the manumitted slaves is not sufficiently close and strict. A most zealous and attentive supervision of those recently imported must be of the first consequence, so as to humanize and reclaim them from their barbarous habits,—to prevent them from relapsing into their primitive state of brutishness—to obviate their being kidnapped from the colony, in fact to exercise a salutary degree of restraint over them—to instruct them, and to assist, overlook, and protect them in all their actions, and in their operations of labour and industry.. I know that all this is said to be already effected, that there are superintendents, managers, and schoolmasters in every village for the above purposes; but it appears to me that they are somewhat too remiss in their duty, and somewhat too heedless and insensible of the humane object for which they are appointed; else no individual could be kidnapped without the occurrence being speedily known,—no individual, however wild and irreclaimable, could return to his primitive savage habits, and establish himself in "the bush," without considerable exertion being made to bring him back. That many have thus been suffered to resume their original barbarism is evident, were there no other proof of the fact, than the numerous nocturnal glimmering fires in the woods, as well as the scattered sheds or wigwams to be seen in various directions among the underwood and jungle throughout the peninsula, large enough to contain only two or three persons sitting upright. No one would willingly apply any personal censure in this case, because the duties of every individual connected with the liberated African department must be, if properly performed, equally arduous, laborious, and unpleasant. But, then, every one connected with it is well paid; and surely a little more paternal control than has been hitherto exercised, besides the common routine of duty, for the sake of humanity, is a great desideratum.

Two things are worthy of remark among these poor Africans: great external respect is paid to the Sabbath. The

blacks on that day are clean and neatly dressed, the religious meetings are well attended, and the busy clamour of the week is hushed into a solemn stillness, more impressive even than the calm serenity which pervades every thing on that hallowed day in our own free and happy land. No doubt the missionaries deserve the credit of this. The other fact is, that, although spirits are remarkably cheap in the colony, I have never seen, in all my excursions among them, a single liberated African in a state of intoxication. I wish I could say as much for their civilized brethren.

CHAPTER III.

In so small a community as that of Sierra Leone, where disease is so frequent a visitor, and death a sort of elbow companion—where mutual assistance and mutual friendship ought to be so invaluable, and where there is so little to be desired beyond the quiet circle of an intellectual and agreeable society, one would expect to find the most perfect harmony subsisting among its European members; but, instead of this, the colony is agitated by perpetual broils, and the most violent party spirit, caused, it is said, by the treacherous calumnies and malignant insinuations of some restless, hot-headed, and evil-disposed individuals, who, to serve their own private ends, manage to set their brother colonists by the ears, while they cautiously and cunningly avoid any personal collision themselves. To-day, one person accuses another of perjury—to-morrow, two others fight a bloodless duel—soon afterwards two more quarrel, and one of them posts the other, connecting his name with the most opprobious epithets—and a little later, two more horsewhip and pummel each other most unmercifully in the street,—and this, too, among men, all of whom either hold responsible official situations, or fill most respectable stations in the colony! And it is a common saying, that, if two dogs worry each other in the street, each is sure to have his party in the crowd collected round them. Where there is no cordial union among the members of any Government, its affairs must be imperfectly conducted,—the community will despise it, and look with a jealous eye on all its proceedings; and, therefore, these squabbles, although but "tempests in a teacup," do not raise the Europeans any higher in the estimation of the blacks, many of whom—the Maroons in

particular—are equal to the duties of the situations which the former hold, and are capable of performing them with at least equal credit. Lieutenant-Colonel Finlay, of the Royal African Corps, is the present Lieutenant-Governor and commanding officer of the garrison, which consists of about eighty soldiers only, belonging to the African Corps, and First and Second West India Regiments. The Governor is a man of the best disposition, and deeply deplores the misunderstandings which so often take place among those living under his protection; but it requires more than good intentions,—it requires decision and severe measures to regulate the affairs of the colony and put an end to the perpetual bickerings and malversations of the Europeans, and the malpractices of the black slave dealers which distract the colony and bring discredit upon every one connected with it. The Colonel was elevated to his present situation about a year ago, having been formerly Governor of Bathurst Town, in the Gambia, where he gave general satisfaction. He has the merit of having raised himself from a very inferior station to the rank which he now holds in the army, though, like several others who enjoy important appointments in the colony, he holds his present high office chiefly by means of a qualification which few indeed are blessed with,—viz. a peculiarity of constitution which enables him to live in its deleterious atmosphere. He has been eight or ten years in the colony, and its dependencies, and has outlived Heaven knows how many governors. Death, in fact, has been the best friend of most of the persons at present in office in the colony; for could men better qualified live there, they would not be permitted to retain their situations long.

The Maroons, it is said, are not very well affected to the Government, because they are not permitted to hold situations to which they conceive themselves entitled, and for the duties of which they are quite as well qualified as the Europeans.—I have heard it also affirmed,—although I have reason to think there is little truth in the statement,—that the liberated slaves are rather discontented; but were this even the case,

little danger need be apprehended from their hostility, as the latent animosity which subsists among the different tribes, as well as the difference of language, must, for an indefinitely long period, prevent any co-operative union among them.

It is understood, that there is a colonial militia corps about to be formed. The officers were appointed some time ago; and an order has been issued for the enrolment of men as soon as possible.

The nice distinction of castes is not observed here as in the West Indies,—nor is there much discrimination made between the lights and shades of moral character in the medley Society of Freetown. The Europeans do not consider it pollution to associate with people of every dye—from the fairest to the blackest—carrying their peculiar taste in this respect even farther than perhaps is altogether warranted by the practices of society anywhere. This is particularly observable at their large dinner parties, where the bottle circulates with uncommon rapidity and effect, in defiance of the minor considerations of health, comfort, and character. Before the cloth is removed, it is no uncommon thing to find a few of the party "*floored*." The odd assemblage, sometimes met together on these occasions, is characterized by an extraordinary mania for toasts and speechifying, during which the King's good English is often murdered most cruelly. At a meeting of this sort, got up by one of the merchants in honor of the Commodore, this singular admixture of shades, of colour, and degrees of rank, was exemplified in a manner peculiarly ludicrous. The Commodore was much amused on finding that he sat down at table opposite the black pilot who last brought his ship into port,—the Chief Justice sat "cheek by jowl" with a person whom he had tried for slave-dealing only a week before,—and the Governor had to nod acquaintance with at least half-a-dozen of the black tag-rag and bobtail of the colony! "Motley's the only wear!" as Jaques says. One of the party, after a short and pithy preface in the same style, proposed the following toast, which I give verbatim:—"*The most usefullest men as is in*

the colony,—I means the doctors!" And at another of these meetings, one of my friends, whose stomach is none of the most capacious, was upbraided by the gentleman who sat beside him—a man high in office, too—as not being *a'f a heater!*"

At their balls, also, the society is, if possible, still less select. They are the "dignity" exhibitions of the West, which the few respectable females of the colony deprecate and avoid, and to which every sable goddess in the vicinity is necessarily pressed attendance. Ye gods! what would the delicate Medician nymph, of pure red and white, say—the tender fair who sips Nature's distillation alone, and would shudder at the bare mention of the word "malt"—were she told—but I could not tell her—that an African beauty on these occasions, will drink five or six bottles of ale in the course of any evening?—that, at the supper table, if you ask her what part of a fowl you shall have the pleasure of sending her, she will perhaps tell you, "a leg and a wing, and *de bubby part*,"—meaning the breast, and that, if, for the sake of the joke, you accompany it with the parson's nose, you will overturn her equanimity, and perhaps have the whole thrown at your head, or, at least, a volley of reproaches, together with several very equivocal allusions to your indelicacy.

17th February, 1831. The Harmattan wind, is rather prevalent at this season. We have experienced its effects pretty frequently during the last two months. It usually blows strong—directly off the land—about east or east-north-east, and seldom continues longer than three or four days. During its continuance, there is a dense white haze constantly resting on the horizon; the thermometer falls three or four degrees, from eighty-two usually to seventy-eight. It produces on the throat and organs of respiration a suffocating and parching effect, similar to the diluted fumes of burning charcoal, although it feels at the same time cold as it rushes down the air passages. The eyes feel hot and smarting, owing, it is said, to a quantity of impalpable dust, floating in the air, borne along from the arid deserts, over which it passes. The

air, at all other times charged with moisture, becomes perfectly dry—vegetation is checked, and the young shoots shrivel and decay. Old residents are liable to ague, arising perhaps from the sudden and continued evaporation which it causes from the surface, and the consequent sudden obstruction of their capillary pores, which have been already debilitated by long continued action. People recently arrived seem to suffer less from its effects than those who have resided long in the country. The former feel relieved from the oppressive heat during its continuance; the latter dread its approach, which their feelings announce long before it is perceptible to the senses of the unassimilated. It has been said, that diseases abate, that convalescence is rapid, and that ulcers speedily heal under its influence. It may be so; but we have not observed any of these good effects. After a shower—of which we have had a few lately—the smell from the shore is peculiarly potent and disagreeable. The same unpleasant odour is occasionally perceptible, without rain, in the evening, when the wind blows off the land. I know of nothing which this odour so much resembles as the noisome smell of green lint, after it has been macerated for some time in water, with which most people are sufficiently conversant who dwell in a part of the country where that plant is cultivated. This, perhaps, proceeds from the damp and decaying vegetation. The hills around Freetown are, at present, almost continually in a blaze. The Sierra Leonese take this method of clearing the country of the superabundant vegetation previous to the approaching rains.

Several masters and others belonging to merchant vessels have died here lately of fever; and boats are arriving weekly from vessels, embarking wood in the river Mellacoree, laden with the dead and dying,—victims of mortality. The mortality among the seamen employed in this river has been at all times so great, that it is vulgarly believed the natives poison the water.

18th February. His Majesty's brig Plumper arrived to-day from the river Nunez, where she had been despatched in

search of a slave vessel, reported to be lying there under Spanish colours. The vessel was found; but she hoisted French colours, and, of course, could not be touched. Several hundred slaves, ready for embarkation, were lodged in a factory, near the spot where she lay, waiting the arrival of a few more, to complete the number she was able to cram into her hold.

3d March. A schooner, under Spanish colours, called the Primeria, arrived here to-day, with three hundred and eleven slaves on board; detained by the Black Joke, tender to this ship, on the 22d ultimo, off Cape Mount, bound from the river Gallinas to the Havanna. From the accounts brought by the captors, there is a great number of vessels between this and Cape Palmos waiting to take in slaves. The tender, on first seeing the Primeira, fired several blank cartridges to bring her to, but paying no attention to this mild injunction, shot was had recourse to, one of which took effect, killing two of the slaves and the cook of the vessel, and wounding two slaves the mate, and four of the crew. The slaves consist of one hundred and eleven men, forty-five women, ninety-eight boys, fifty-three girls, and four infants at the breast, one of whom was born since the period of capture, whose mother, unhappy creature, sickly and emaciated, was suckling it on deck, with hardly a rag to cover either herself or her offspring.

The small space in which these unfortunate beings are huddled together is almost incredible. The schooner is only one hundred and thirty tons burden, and the slave deck only two feet two inches high, so that they can hardly even sit upright. The after part of the deck is occupied by the women and children, separated by a wooden partition from the other slaves. The horrors of this infernal apartment—the want of air—the suffocating heat—the filth—the stench—may be easily imagined; although it is remarked that this ship is one of the cleanest that ever was brought to the colony. The men were bound together in twos, by irons rivetted round the ancles.—On their arrival these chains were removed, and they appear

ed much gratified. The countenances of all seemed lighte up with satisfaction at the prospect of being put on shore, t wards which they often turned to gaze, with an expression wonder and impatience. I went on board to visit the wound ed. About one half of the boys were circumcised. I coul not ascertain that they belonged to a separate tribe, althoug their general appearance seemed to me slightly different fro the rest. Slave vessels, in the rivers adjacent to Sier Leone, receive considerable assistance in the pursuit of the illicit traffic from some of the merchants of this colony, in th shape of articles of trade and provisions; which trifling cir cumstance, as its pays well, and is no direct engagement in the slave trade, these pence and farthing individuals may, per haps, very well reconcile to their consciences. We learn that the Primeira was supplied with bread from a vessel belonging to a merchant of Freetown.

4th March. The slaves are all landed from the Primeira today, and placed in the slave yard: A large canoe was employed for this purpose, which, after several trips, brought the whole on shore in the course of two hours, taking in from fifty to eighty at a time, the men first, then the women, and lastly the children. These were singing on board the schooner, in anticipation of the boat's return, and continued their song all the way on shore, laughing and clapping their hands. But the men and women, after they reached the yard, when the momentary gratification of setting foot on land once more had passed away, looked sullen and dissatisfied, but not dejected. It struck me that on landing they expected to be allowed to go wherever they pleased, and were consequently disappointed and angry when they found themselves still under control. It was impossible to gather from their looks whether any of them were keenly alive to the miseries of the situation from from which they had just been released, or whether they were capable of appreciating the advantages of emancipation. I may mention, as an instance of their extreme mental debasement, that the women who were nursing usually had both breasts occupied, the one with their own offspring, the other

uckling one of the numerous abominable filthy monkeys on oard the schooner. Among the whole there was scarcely ufficient covering for the nakedness of half a dozen persons. But all of them, particularly the boys and girls, on meeting he numerous persons who had, like myself, gone to witness heir landing, evinced by their actions a natural and unaffected ense of modesty.

20th March. A French sloop, called the Virginie, of fifty ons, and ninety-two slaves on board, was brought in here to ay, under the following very extraordinary circumstances: This vessel was fitted out at Nantz about a year ago, and owards the end of last month she sailed from the Plantain slands, situated between fifty and sixty miles to the south-vard of this river, with her cargoe of slaves, supplied by a lack resident, named Corker, among whom were several egroes who had been liberated at this colony. When she ailed, her crew consisted of eight persons, but besides these he had eleven prssengers,—the master and ten of the com-any of a French vessel, stranded on the coast. Her desti ation was Guadaloupe; and while making the best of her way o that port, about eight days ago, the slaves rose, took posses-ion of the vessel, and killed the captain and crew, with the xception of the cabin boy, who was dreadfully wounded in he scuffle. The passengers escaped, after some severe ounds, up the rigging, where they remained some time un-er great apprehension, but at length ventured down, on be-ng assured by the slaves, who were now intoxicated with joy t the success of their exploit, that, if if they would promise o take the vessel into Sierra Leone, no harm should be done hem. When they came down, however, they were stripped, ut in irons below, treated with great severity, and compelled lternately to steer the vessel, with many threats that, if they hould not see land by a certain day, the whole should be assacred. Fortunately for them, they made the land on the ay named. The captain, by his cruel and inhuman conduct -flogging some the slaves daily, and striking them on all oc-asions with whatever weapon was near him—was the cause

of the hostile attack, the success of which was owing to the women, who, from the incommodious size of the vessel, had been placed in the apartment containing the arms, which they managed to convey unperceived to the men, who rushed upon deck well prepared, and soon overwhelmed their weak and unprincipled opponents; but not without one or two of their own number, killed, and several very severely wounded, which served to exasperate them still more. Those of the French crew who were not killed in the rencontre, were deliberately and exultingly massacred, with all the horrible barbarity of which savages, smarting under recent injuries, are capable, and were afterwards thrown overboard. When the vessel appeared off this port, our boarding officer was confidently and joyfully received by the slaves as a deliverer. One of those who had been formerly liberated at Sierra Leone, and who spoke a little broken English, explained the occurrence, and stated that he had been recaptured while carrying some rice in his canoe to the Sherboro for sale, and the remaining Frenchmen confirmed his account. The slaves on their arrival exhibited a most ludicrous and grotesque appearance. They were all armed with something or other. One was standing sentinel over the man at the helm, with a drawn sword; his only article of dress a hat, the crown of which he had knocked out, and placed on his head, with the rim uppermost. Every part of the vessel had been ransacked for articles to dress and adorn their persons. Some of them were decked with fancy striped shirts, and two or three waistcoats, without inexpressibles, with a sword buckled round the middle. Some had on dress coats, without any covering either for their heads or their "hinder ends;" and others had only a waistcoat, with two or three silver watches dangling round their necks. Their prisoners, in irons below, filthy, pitiful looking objects, were in their shirts only, dabbled with blood, as were the sails and deck of the vessel. Even after she had anchored, the Frenchmen did not consider themselves safe until and English officer and a party of men were sent on board to take charge of her. As soon as she was reported to

the Governor, measures were immediately taken to have the slaves landed in the morning.

24th March. We sailed early this morning with two of our tenders, the Fair Rosamond and the Black Joke, to run down the coast for Prince's Island and Fernando Po. Having now left the colony for an indefinite period, I shall conclude the foregoing account with a few general observations. As a proof, if any proof be necessary, that the climate of Sierra Leone is at *all* times pregnant with danger to European constitutions, I shall only instance some occurrences of the last four months, which are always considered to be the healthiest of the year. During these months, the oldest residents affirm, that the climate has been more congenial than they ever remember it to have been at any former period, and yet we have had on board a number of cases of fever of an ephemeral nature, together with several pretty severe cases of remittent fever. One or two people have died on shore of the latter disease, and the masters and crews of merchant vessels in the river have suffered very considerably from it. I have heard it said by persons in the colony, but cannot vouch for the correctness of the statement, that the concentrated form of the endemial fever, and consequent mortality at Freetown, has for many years assumed a periodical return—that the years 1823-26-29 have been more sickly and fatal than the intermediate years. A remark has been made, somewhat similar to this, by Dalzell, in his *History of Dahomey*, p. 143, published in 1793. He says, "Besides the annual unhealthy period, there seems to be a collection of pestiferous vapours which remains imprisoned for a longer period, and does not emerge above the surface oftener than once in five, six, or seven years." But setting the climate of the colony entirely aside, it appears to me that Freetown, bounded on the south by a mountainous region, magnificently picturesque, beyond which extends a rich and fertile country, and situated on the sloping bank of a noble river, with good anchorage, and ingress and egress at all times, is admirably adapted for a commercial station. As an agricultural colony

the Peninsula itself can never become of any importance. It is of too trifling extent, rocky, and mountainous, and the soil in general poor, and easily exhausted. Aware of this, many of the liberated slaves cultivate only one half of their allotted portion of land, leaving the other in fallow until the ensuing year. As an acquaintance with the interior of Africa, its capabilities, enlightenment, and hidden sources of wealth, must at all times be a grand object, as well with the merchant as the philanthropist, it must unquestionably be desirable to retain Sierra Leone as a commercial station; for commercial intercourse has always had the effect of extending local knowledge, and producing civilization: even those parts of the coast where the traffic in slaves abounds are higly civilized, according to what is commonly undertood by civilization, compared with others, which have little communication with Europeans. But as the climate is so destructive, the defence of the colony might be safely intrusted to the hands of those European merchants who choose to risk their lives in the pursuit of wealth, together with the Maroons and Nova Scotians, who would be sufficient of themselves to protect it from any hostile attack which the natives might make upon it, without any military force, beyond the body of militia at present organizing, and a police establishment. The probability of such an attack, I believe, has never entered into any one's head, as the most friendly relations have always been kept up with the Chiefs in the vicinity, who have not for many years exhibited any hostile intentions. Were the liberated Africans, however, left entirely to themselves, without superintendence or control, there is little doubt, while the slave trade continues, that from the dissensions which must arise among the various tribes, the whole would be recaptured and sold into slavery in the course of a very short time. As they have been released from bondage by our exertions, and placed here under our sacred protection, we are bound to foster and defend them by all the ties of honour and humanity. Whatever alterations may be effected in the government of the colony—and I believe important changes are in contemplation—some

public establishment must, therefore, still be necessary, were it only for the last purpose: but as the climate is at all times so injurious to Europeans, and as the blacks are the only permanent residents, and are, many of them, particularly the Maroons and Nova Scotians, quite capable of filling situations of trust, it would seem to be advisable, even were the colony to remain on its present footing, to remove by degress as many Europeans as possible from their present official appointments, substituting the blacks in their room. When they find that they are considered eligible to hold these situations, their desire to obtain them will be great, and their anxiety to qualify themselves and their children for that purpose will be in proportion; and I have no doubt that ultimately there would not be any absolute necessity for a single European in the colony.

27th March. We are off Cape Mount this morning, bending our course to the southward. So numerous and immense are the shoals of fish on this part of the coast, particularly in calm weather, that the sea for many miles round appears in a complete state of tumult. Unruffled by a breath, its still surface bursts forth suddenly in different directions as if it were alive. Frothing and agitated, the circumscribed splashing of each separate riotous shoal of bonita, fry, and sharks intermingled, resembles the beating surf on so many sunken rocks, and has, no doubt, often been mistaken for such in the many "doubtful dangers" with which our charts are so variously studded, to the great terror of all sea-going old women. Thousands and tens of thousands of these finny tenants of the deep are leaping and gamboling alternately in the air and in the water, in the most suprising manner; feeding, to all appearance, on each other,—the hungry bonita gobbling up the unoffending and defenceless fry, and the ravenous sharks devouring both. One of these voracious animals is seen in the centre of each shoal of small fish, and seems to help himself as they swim rapidly round him in an anxious and alarmed manner, giving the broken and agitated surface a gyratory appearance. But even more abundant than these are the re-

mora, or sucking fish, which adheres so tenaciously to whatever it comes in contact with, by means of the singular apparatus on the back of its head, that no little strength is required to drag it from its hold. These attach themselves to the bottoms of ships in such multitudes, that they are said sometimes very materially to retard their progress through the water. Whenever any thing is thrown overboard, they are seen to rush from the ship's bottom in a body, and attack the substance, if edible, and after devouring it return to their resting place. Several of these have been caught with a baited hook, measuring generally from twelve to eighteen inches. With the idea of *thinning* the sea of them, I suppose, and of course, increase the ship's velocity, a few diverting skippers have been in the habit of compelling their crews to catch two daily, and to muster every morning with one in each hand, or subject themselves to the severe displeasure of their sage commander. It is astonishing through what strange, minute, and undiscovered crannies the sagacity of some men, "vested with a little brief authority," will sometimes ooze out.

31st March. A current has been setting us on so rapidly to the north-north-east, that we are surprised this afternoon by finding ourselves close off the river Cestos, about forty-five miles out of our reckoning. The natives are making fires on the beach, the smoke from which is seen to rise in various directions as a signal for us to land, and "*make trade*" as they call it—the usual signal to merchant vessels, which they no doubt take us for.

2d April. As we run to the southward the lightning, particularly over the land, is nightly most vivid and unintermitting. We passed Cape Palmas yesterday, noted by African adventurers for the violent tornadoes so often met with in its vicinity. We had also to bear the brunt of one of these in passing; however, the wind was not very violent, but the lightning was most brilliant, dancing and flashing like so many lighted torches hurled through the dark and troubled sky. The thermometer rises as we approach the equator. Its lowest daily

range at present is eighty-three, highest eighty-five degrees.

12th. The Island of St. Thomas is in sight to-day, but at a great distance. We are in north latitude, within thirty-six miles of the equator, and in five degrees thirty minutes east longitude. The rainy season has just commenced here.—Since the 5th we have had showers daily, and such ungentle ones as penetrate to the skin in a very few minutes; and, owing to the shrinking of the wood, and consequent opening of the seams, make the ship thoroughly wet to the kelson.

16th. The lower part of Prince's Island, towards which we are directing our course, was indistinctly seen this morning through the drizzle that seemed to be falling all round it, the dense and dark clouds shrouding its summit in a wide impenetrable pall of murky vapour. About midday a tornado came on, accompanied by heavy rain and thick weather, preventing us from reaching the roadstead this day. Prince's Island is celebrated among African cruizers for the bad weather so commonly met with near it, its frequent and vexatious showers of rain and gusts of wind being quaintly termed by our seamen "Prince's Mixture," and of this we have been compelled to take a few very hearty pinches, *nolens volens*, during the last twelve hours. On the 17th, we approached the island rapidly, with fine weather and a clear sky. Its high and broken outline has a most singular appearance, and might, with very little stretch of imagination, be thought to resemble a vast ivy-covered ruin. Nature must have been in one of her most fanciful humours when she formed a land so beautiful and romantic, covered, as it is, with one continued sombre impenetrable forest, from the bosom of which issue miniature mountains, perpendicular solitary rocks, and undulating hills, of singular and fantastic shape, decked in the gayest attire of vegetation. When at some distance from the island, one of the highest and most remarkable peaks in its centre resembles in shape the horn of a rhinoceros; and in West Bay, which we reached about noon, the uncommon appearance and formation of the hills is equally striking. The

whole of the vicinity of this Bay is covered with a rich grove of majestic trees, tangled and matted together, with thick-leaved parasites, and creeping plants of the brightest green, clothing, like a thick garment, the body of the island, which elevates itself suddenly to its loftiest height, from the verge of this capacious basin, but variegated in its ascent by the sportive agency of Nature, which has thus thrust forth, from the thick forest on its sides, rocks and hills of various form—accuminated or dental—round or capital—or lofty table lands, resembling artificial fortresses, whose precipitous grayish-white basaltic cliffs, partially ornamented with hanging patches of shrubs, are seen emerging from the green labyrinth, streaked with the black soil and decayed brushwood, washed from their summits by the sweeping rains. A very pretty cascade is seen from the anchorage, foaming and frothing down one of the loftiest of these jutting precipices; in fine weather, only a narrow white thread dividing the dark face of the cliff, but tumbling down in a broad and agitated sheet of foam during the inundating periodical torrents of these latitudes. Whoever has seen the wild and romantic scenery on the south side of the entrance of Rio de Janeiro, will understand the character of that of Prince's Island. The resemblance is striking; but the former is far inferior in objects of natural beauty, to the diversified grandeur and wanton and luxuriant magnificence of this gem of the ocean.

In West Bay there is nothing that deserves the name of a town, but merely a few scattered huts in various places, nearly hid among the trees, the largest congeries of which has obtained the name of Ferrara Village, from being situated on a plantation belonging to Senor Ferrara, a Portuguese, possessing the largest property and greatest influence in the island. These huts are of the most wretched description, and inhabited by slaves, attached to the estates, or by blacks, who are led to prefer the sea shore, because they are enabled to obtain a few of the luxuries of life, by supplying vessels which may touch here, with fruit, and other articles of fresh provisions. In Ferrara Village there is one stone building, the only one to be

seen, and this is unfinished, but serves for the occasional residence of the owner of the plantation, and his lady, who, by the by, has a great partiality for the British navy, and the society of British officers, the number of Portuguese on the island being very small, and their society by no means desirable. The good lady forsakes her other estates, and migrates to this spot, on the arrival of any of our ships of war, bringing with her a whole train of attendants—male and female slaves. Setting no bounds to her hospitality, she uses every endeavor to please and amuse us, and make the time pass agreeably, and has, in consequence of this, obtained the title of "Queen" of Prince's Island. She is about thirty-five years of age, has rather a pleasing countenance, but a clumsy figure and awkward gait: and although born of Portuguese parents, has never been out of the island, and is consequently quite unsophisticated, in fact, a complete child of Nature, if we except an uncommon penchant for dress and ornaments. She understands English pretty well, but speaks it imperfectly, in the usual lingua franca style of the coast. Being thus untaught, much of her conduct, if measured according to our scale of female decorum, might be set down to levity or vulgarity; but in point of hospitality, kindness to her slaves, and goodness of disposition, she is the very pink of Portuguese. I think it necessary to say thus much of a lady from whom every officer in his Majesty's ships, employed on this pestilent coast, has experienced more or less of disinterested civility, attention, and kindness,—matters of no trifling consideration where all around—climate, country, and inhabitants—are savage and inhospitable.

The lower part of the hill skirting the Bay seems to be well cultivated. The soil here is alluvial, and very rich and productive. The coffee plantations on the island are very extensive, and the berry is much prized for its rich flavour. Almost all the trophical fruits are to be had in great abundance. Hogs and poultry are very plentiful and cheap. Although there is no great variety of birds on the island, their plumage is exceedingly splendid, particularly that of several varieties

of the king-fisher. A very intelligent species of *Fringilla* discourses sweet music in the woods, and the gray parrots, which are very numerous, keep up a constant chattering during the day; bodies of them flying over the ships from the north to the south side of the Bay every evening about sunset, and returning again soon after day-break. Numbers of these, together with every article of fresh provisions which the island produces, are brought along side the ships in canoes for sale or barter. Old clothes are the favorite articles of exchange, money being of little or no value. The water is excellent and abundant, and is obtained from several beautiful and romantic bubbling rivulets, which have there source in the dense and heavy clouds, attracted and detained by the numerous and tree-clad lofty mountain peaks. The negroes here have a singular method of catching a fish, rather smaller than a pilchard, and somewhat resembling it, of which they are exceedingly fond. The plan is something like that used in England, with the acrid seeds of the *Cocculus Indicus*, for the capture of fish, particularly by mischievous schoolboys. They build a low wall of loose stones round a pool, just within low-water mark. This is completely covered, of course, when the sea is full, which, as it recedes, leaves numbers of the fry detained in the trap. The pool, however, being pretty large, and the fish uncommonly nimble, it is impossible to catch them with any degree of ease. The negroes then take a plant, which, in a slight degree, resembles the blue garden lupine, the leaves and stem of which they squeeze, pressing out the juice and stirring it in the water. This has a mawkish unpleasant smell, and produces a most extraordinary effect upon the fish, although a very small portion of the plant is made use of. They at first rush from side to side of the pool, apparently in the greatest alarm and excitement, and then suddenly become torpid, and are easily taken with the hand.

The island is about ten or twelve miles in length, five or six broad, and perhaps from three thousand to four thousand feet high. Although of such trifling breadth, yet the passage across it, even on horse back, occupies two or three hours.

owing to the ruggedness and various windings of the mountain road. Besides what has been mentioned, it produces cedar and iron wood in abundance. Bush cats, as they are called, and monkies, are very numerous, but by no means troublesome; and only two species of snakes have been observed on the island, the one green, the other black, both of which are small and harmless. The only article exported from the island is coffee, almost all of which goes to Boston in America, and Bordeaux in France; none whatever is received by Portugal, the mother country. St. Antonio, a small town, situated on the eastern side of the island, is considered its capital. The vicinity of this town is marshy and very insalubrious; but in West Bay, if we may believe the reports of the natives, fever has never made its appearance; and those who have contracted intermittents at St. Antonio, speedily get rid of them on residing for a short time in this vicinity. But, of course, this boast of its immunity from fever must be received with caution; as a proof of it, the Black Joke tender, when fitting in this bay some time ago, had several men seized with fever, one of whom died.

19th. Several of the squadron, including the Atholl, Medina, and Sea Flower, tender to this ship, are lying here, recently from Fernando Po, where they had been for a considerable period. The master of the Medina, and a boy, died to day of a fever, contracted there, and her commander is labouring under the same disease. The purser of the Atholl, and a seaman of the Sea Flower, are both seriously ill of the same pitiless scourge, caught at the same place. The latter was sent on board this ship to-day, under my care, and is evidently in a most precarious condition. This does not say much in favour of the salubrity of our new settlement at Fernando Po.

22d April. Yesterday I went round the north end of the island in a boat to Porto Antonio. We were five hours on the passage, starting from the ship at six A. M. and arriving at eleven. Skirting West Bay, we found the shore garnished with numerous large rocks, consisting of isolated bundles of

basaltic pillars, some upright, others horizontal and oblique; here resembling an artificial wall, there appearing above the water irregularly rolled together, like the ruined pillars and steps of an ancient temple, the broken ends of the smaller columns shewing like the remains of its tasselated pavement. The island to the northward has a greater appearance of hill and dale, and is more extensively cultivated than in the vicinity of West Bay. Most of the beautiful valleys near the beach possess some straggling huts, the residence of fishermen, whose canoes are seen hauled up on the sand, or paddling some miles off shore, manned with four or five hands, busily engaged in their occupation. The crews of these slender craft stand upright when they use the paddles, which are consequently of considerable length, The country along the sea coast on this part of the island is richly wooded throughout, neat-looking *Quintas* appearing through the trees in different directions. Porto Antonio is a very deep, narrow inlet, protected by batteries erected on the brows of three or four of the numerous verdant hills on each side, mounting a very considerable number of guns, and apparently in pretty good order. We were hailed from the principal of these in passing, and desired to pull on shore, which we did, and received a black soldier on board to guide us to the residence of the Governor. This august personage, Captain Joaquim of the Portuguese marine, happened to be at his country residence in ill health, and Senor Ferrara, mentioned above, was officiating in his absence. The house of this gentleman, and those of two or three other merchants, situated near the head of the bay, to the right, have rather an elegant and imposing appearance. A little beyond these, is the town of St. Antonio, placed in the low swampy ground at the very head of the bay, in the worst situation which could have been chosen. It consists of rectangular, wet, unpaved, grass-grown streets; the houses built of wood, covered with red tiles, with holes in the wall instead of windows, and surrounded by wooden balconies, in which the inhabitants have generally a grass hammock placed, to loll in during the heat of the day. In

this wretched town there are no fewer than seven or eight churches,—a little superior, of course, to the other buildings, and distinguished from them by a plentiful coating of white-wash. Only about four or five hundred inhabitants reside in the town—many of those who possess houses there, from its insalubrity, preferring a residence on their pieces of cultivated ground in the country, where they produce coffee, cotton, and other articles for exportation, and domestic use. Here was residing one of the many victims to Don Miguel's tyrannical policy,—a priest who had delivered a sermon at Oporto, in which he had made use of some slight invective against the government of the usurper, for which he was, with another of the same profession, exiled for a period of ten years. His companion in misfortune was sent to the Island of St. Thomas, where the poisonous atmosphere, aided, no doubt, by his own mental distress, put a period to his existence a few weeks after his arrival. The host was paraded about the streets while we were here, and the padres, most of whom were blacks, with a string of black boys accompanying the procession, bellowed most lustily, with little external show of devotion, what, I suppose, was intended for a hymn of praise, while the inhabitants in the houses, as they passed, knelt and crossed themselves. The performers in the ceremony, however, had not even the decency to sham a little devotion, or effect to shew, by their demeanour, some respect for the solemn mummery in which they were engaged. This, however, seems to be the common sin of Catholics, in countries much nearer to the shrine of St. Peter. Oftener than once I have seen a pretty Italian girl on her knees in church, with her hands clasped, muttering a prayer, and at the same time looking heedlessly round her, and smiling and glancing unutterable things from under her long dark eye-lashes, when she found that she had attracted the notice of a stranger, who, Heaven knows, had perhaps as little piety, but a much larger share of hypocrisy than herself. The ground about the town emits a strong and offensive smell; and the atmosphere feels very hot, damp, and close. In passing the guard-house, the black sentry, with

nothing else save a ragged shirt on, and the belt of a car touch box buckled round his middle, presented arms to us; and the officer of the guard came out with a parrot in his hand, and asked us if we wanted to buy!

There are about four hundred soldiers, including militia and regulars, on the island; about twenty European residents, and half as many more mulattoes. The whole number of its inhabitants, including the slaves on the estates of the Portuguese, who form the chief portion of the population, was stated to me to be about five thousand. Of these a very few are runaway slaves, who occupy principally the south part of it. There is at present lying at this place two schooners under Spanish colours, whose occupation is doubtless the transportation of slaves from Africa. These vessels, Spanish as well as Portuguese, are in the frequent habit of coming here to refit and obtain refreshments, and perhaps merchandise with which to purchase their cargo of human beings. From the strong current against us, our return to the ship by the same way occupied eleven hours, although the distance does not exceed sixteen miles.

Having completed our stock of wood and water, we sailed again on the twenty-fourth, and after one week's unsuccessful cruize off the river Bonny, bore up for Clarence Settlement at Fernando Po, where we arrived and anchored on the 2d of May. The superficies of this island, which is said to be about forty-five miles long by twenty broad, does not possess the broken diversified appearance of Prince's Island—the starting cliffs, the unconnected and fantastic hills, the steep ridges bursting from its verdant and expansive bosom, like the rich carved work of an alto relievo. Here the land appears gradually and uninterruptedly to ascend from the sea coast, and unbroken, excepting on its western aspect, where, in some places near the summit, it is ridgy and precipitous, terminating in two lofty peaks, the highest and most northern of which, called Clarence Peak, is 10,700 feet in height, and is seen occasionally, at distant and uncertain periods, to emit

smoke and flame; the southmost is considerably less, but equally remarkable, from its apex resembling a cone with the top broken off, and, by the limit of trees being at the base of this cone, appearing as if it had been like, the former, a volcano at some remote period. These mountains, covered as far as the base of their conical summits with lofty forest trees, are separated from each other by a deep and wide vale, studded with a few smaller hills and rising grounds equally luxuriant in verdure, o'ertopped by groves of palms; issuing from which, as well as from the low land near the sea-shore, may be seen numerous wreaths of curling smoke from the fires of the natives, but no hamlets, huts, or places of residence are visible—nothing but trees, trees, trees, to the very water's edge, thick, green, and bushy, like a rich vegetable garden. As we approached the land, with a brisk breeze from the south-west, and a hazy atmosphere, the mountains assumed a deep blue colour, and the irregular strata of dense white clouds resting on their sides, seeming to intermingle with the deep cerulean ground, resembled through the misty sky a vast and irregular wall of polished variegated marble. The Cameroon mountains on the mainland, as we more nearly approached the settlement, were seen towering their lofty heads amidst the clouds, thirteen thousand feet above the level of the sea. The summits of these mountains are often seen covered with snow. We found the Black Joke here refitting, after having had, on the night between the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth April, a severe but successful action off the south-east point of this island, with a large Spanish slave brig, called the Marinerito, of three hundred and three tons, five guns, twenty pounders, (one on a pivot,) and seventy-two men, and having four hundred and ninety-six slaves on board. The tender had only two guns mounted, eighteen pounders, and forty-four men. The action was most gallantly contested, and taking place during the night, in calm weather, when each vessel was obliged to use her sweeps, lasted for several hours. The Spaniard did every thing in his power to escape, until a light breeze sprang up, when, finding the tender gained upon him, he shortened

sail, and prepared to defend his vessel to the utmost, and the action only terminated by running the tender alongside, boarding, and taking possession of him. The tender lost one man and had six wounded, among whom was her resolute and excellent commander, Lieutenant William Ramsay. The prize had fifteen of her crew killed, four desperately wounded, and several slightly; and I regret to say, there were also unfortunately two of the slaves killed, and a few wounded, by the shot from the capturing vessel, and the cutlasses of the boarders in the scuffle. Among the numerous affairs of this nature which have occurred on the coast, this is decidedly one of the most spirited. The disparity of force was unusually great. The Marinerito is almost new, and one of the finest vessels ever seen afloat, being fifteen feet longer, and having greater beam than the tender, which is allowed by every one to be herself a most symmetrical specimen of naval architecture, but is fast going to decay. The cool determination of our seamen was irresistible, sweeping and firing alternately; while the Spaniard compelled the slaves to take the oar, and had therefore an additional advantage over his pursuers. It is gratifying to think that *Jack* is still the same—that he fights for the love of it just as he was wont to do—for it is not to be supposed that any notions concerning the inhumanity of slave-dealing, or the boon of emancipation which he is about to confer on so many hundreds of his fellow creatures, enter his thoughtless head, when he begins the conflict. He is ordered—it is his duty: and, besides this, he likes it, being a pugnacious kind of animal, fond of a little excitement, to vary the monotony of his life, hebetated by seclusion from the rest of the world, and to add another tale to the string of extraordinary "*yarns*" which he generally has to "*spin.*" I shall give one anecdote, as an instance of the remarkable coolness, intrepidity, and humour of *Jack*, even in the very thick of the fight. Just as the tender got alongside of her antagonist, her commander gave orders for all hands to board. The boatswain's mate, Peter Kenney—a fine old seamen, with only one eye, having perhaps lost the other in some similar "brush," for

it seemed to be a pleasant sort of amusement to him—deliberately took out his pipe, and, after a piercing whistle, repeated loudly, "All hands to board!" and called out to one of his shipmate's as he jumped upon the enemy's deck—so confident was he of success—"Give us a rope to lash the ——— with!" One of the young midshipmen, Mr. Pearce, zealous to distinguish himself, had three hairbreadth 'scapes in the confusion of boarding. Besides having a pistol ball through his hat, he was poked overboard, just as he got on the slave vessel's gunwale, by a sabre thrust, which penetrated his clothes, and grazed his side; and he was, also, nearly losing his life after he got there, being unable to swim, and his perilous situation remaining for some time unobserved. When our brave fellows got on board, and the decks were cleared, which was but the work of a moment, the scene of misery which presented itself was truly heart-rending. The inhuman crew (among whom, I regret to say, were several Englishmen) were not to be pitied, but their wounded received every assistance from Mr. Douglas, the medical officer of the tender. It was their victims, the poor hapless slaves, that demanded the commiseration and the fullest exertion of the humanity of the captors.—It has been said that during the action two of them were killed, and several wounded; and, when we consider the mass of human beings on board, so small a number is truly surprising. Crowded to excess below—frightened by the cannonading—without water to drink, the allowance of which is at all times scanty—and almost without air during the whole of the engagement—death had already begun to make frightful ravages among them. In two days from the period of capture, thirty of them had paid the debt of nature. One hundred and seven were placed in the wretched hole called an hospital, at Fernando Po, where every day still added one or two to the fatal list, from privation, terror, and mental affliction. The rest, little able to undertake the voyage, were sent under the superintendence of Mr. Bosanquet, mate of the tender,* to

* Since promoted, as well as the commander and assistant surgeon of the tender, for the gallantry and skill that each displayed during the unequal conflict.

Sierra Leone in the prize for adjudication by the Court of Mixed Commission there. Immediately after the vessel was secured, the living were found sitting on the heads and bodies of the dead and dying below. Witnessing their distress, the captors poured a large quantity of water into a tub for them to drink out of; but, being unused to such generosity, they merely imagined that their usual scanty daily allowance of half-a-pint per man, was about to be served out; and when given to understand that they might take as much of it and as often as they felt inclined, they seemed astonished, and rushed in a body, with headlong eagerness, to dip their parched and feverished tongues into the refreshing liquid. Their heads became wedged in the tub, and were with some difficulty got out—not until several were nearly suffocated in its contents. The drops that fell on the deck were lapped and sucked up with a most frightful eagerness. Jugs were also obtained, and the water handed round to them; and in their precipitation and anxiety to obtain relief from the burning thirst which gnawed their vitals, they madly bit the vessels with their teeth, and champed them into atoms. Then, to see the look of gratification—the breathless unwillingness to part with the vessel from which, by their glistening eyes, they seemed to have drawn such exquisite enjoyment! Only half satisfied, they clung to it, though empty, as if it were more dear to them, and had afforded them more of earthly bliss; than all the nearest and dearest ties of kindred and affection. It was a picture of such utter misery from a natural want, more distressing than any one can conceive who has not witnessed the horrors attendant on the slave trade on the coast of Africa, or who has not felt, for many hours, the cravings of a burning thirst under a tropical sun. On their way ashore to this island from the prize—their thirst still unquenched—they lapped the salt water from the boat's side. The sea to them was new: until they tasted all its bitterness, they, no doubt, looked upon it as one of their own expansive fresh water streams, in which they were wont to bathe, or drink with unrestrained freedom and enjoyment. Before they were landed, many of the Africans already liberated at this settlement

went on board to see them, and found among them several of their friends and relations. The meeting, as may be supposed, was for the moment one of pleasure, but soon changed into pain and grief. Can there be in Britain—the happy and the free—an individual with a heart in his bosom who will, after this, advocate slavery? A single fact like this overthrows all the plausible sophistry which such an individual may make use of to obtain partisans besides those who, like himself, are interested in its support. Such converts to the creed of the right of property in human flesh are much misled. They have only shewn to them the bright side of the picture—the comparatively happy (yet truly wretched!) condition of the slaves in our West India colonies. They know nothing of the withering horrors daily taking place on the coast of this desolated and unhappy land, from which between sixty and eighty thousand of its poor, unoffending children are forcibly abstracted annually—cruelly torn from home, friends, and kindred—from all that can alone make a life of wretchedness tolerable. The Spanish crew, with the exception of a few sent up in the prize to Sierra Leone, were kept prisoners for some time at Fernando Po, but were afterwards sent in the Atholl to the island of Anabona, where they were landed and turned adrift.

The wretched condition of so many unfortunate beings, crowded in such a small space as the slave deck of this vessel, was shocking to every feeling of humanity. The disinterested zeal which our Government has always displayed in the cause of humanity, by urging foreign powers to exert themselves in preventing vessels from fitting out in their ports for the slave trade, and to enforce the penalties enacted by law against those persons found engaged in it, together with our own individual exertions towards its suppression, although highly creditable and praiseworthy, have, unfortunately, from a want of sufficient firmness and resolution in our remonstrances, and a callousness on the part of these powers, had an indirect tendency to aggravate the

barbarity with which it is carried on. The miscreants engaged in this nefarious traffic, to render their emoluments commensurate to the hazard they now run of capture and punishment, in consequence of these benevolent exertions, cram into their vessels twice the number of unhappy wretches they were wont to do; so that, if once or twice successful, their losses, by capture, may be covered, and their risks compensated. The profits are so enormous, that, with the large number of slaves now embarked, one successful adventure out of three or four will do more than pay the expenses of all. Although Britain, by her beneficent endeavours, has reed many of these ill-starred Africans from their miserable thraldom, yet she has thus, unconsciously, added to the cruelty of the vile commerce, owing to the supineness, indifference, or bad faith, of those nations pledged, by means of her humane endeavours, to its entire annihilation, who, were they zealous in the cause, would grant us the right of search, and capture of all vessels fitted for the reception of slaves, as well as those found with slaves actually on board,—would prevent vessels from fitting out in their ports for the trade, and would punish those persons severely who might be found carrying it on.

A perusal of the printed correspondence between the British and foreign Governments, relative to the slave trade, places the magnanimity and benevolence of our own happy country in the most brilliant and enviable light, as contrasted with the cruel apathy and imbecility of those nations, bound by every engagement to its suppression, but whose subjects are yet indirectly permitted to carry on the infamous traffic. The formation of a settlement by the British Government at Fernando Po had chiefly for its humane object the removal of the Mixed Commission Courts nearer the principal seat of the slave trade, that its victims might be sooner landed and located, after the capture of the vessel in which they were embarked,—the passage to Sierra Leone usually occupying a month, during which the sufferings of the unfortunate creatures are dreadful, great

numbers of them dying of dysentery, or other diseases, from the small quantity and the badness of the food and water, and the excessive crowding. The obstacles which the Spanish Government placed in the way of the formation of this settlement, the toleration of vessels to fit out at Cadiz, obviously for the traffic, although, ostensibly, as licit traders to St. Thomas and Prince's Islands—the frequent renewal of claims by the Brazilian Government, for reimbursements in cases of vessels condemned for illegal trading in slaves, and of applications for permission to its subjects to carry on this trade for a longer period than that to which it was limited by the Convention of 23d November, 1826—the pertinacious determination of the French Government not to grant us the right of search and capture of the numerous vessels we meet with, under the French flag, engaged in this hateful traffic—the extensive annual importation of slaves into the French Colonies of Guadaloupe and Martinique, in the face of the established laws, by evident connictation or tacit consent, on the part of the local authorities—the fact of the Portuguese Government agent at Boa Vista, being openly one of the most extensive slave dealers on the coast of Africa, and continuing in his illicit intercourse so long unobstructed,—all serve to shew that these Governments are regardless of their engagements, and have not a genuine desire towards the abolition of negro slavery; but endeavour to screen from merited punishment those unprincipled adventurers, by whom the restrictions of the treaties between these Governments and our own are so flagrantly violated: and it is evident, from the style of our remonstrances, that we cannot *command* upright dealing, where the interest of these powers is concerned.

While there are so many facilities afforded to the subjects of these foreign Governments for carrying on this illicit trade, all our single-handed endeavours towards its suppression must prove worse than useless, as will be seen in the sequel. Until it shall be declared piracy by a law of nations, and the equipment of vessels for the slave trade shall be held an actual en-

gagement in it — and until the most cordial union and co-operation, and the most energetic measures, are adopted by all civilized nations towards its suppression — and the utmost extent of punishment inflicted on those who bid defiance to the laws enacted against in, — the trade of blood can never be entirely put an end to. Treaties, I suppose, are indispensable preliminaries towards a consummation so devoutly to be wished; but foreign powers seem hitherto to have denounced the slave trade among their subjects, without any intention of *fulfilling* the stipulations of these treaties, but with the sole purpose of obtaining something in return for their concessions, highly favourable to themselves, from England, whose weak point they, no doubt, consider to be, her predilection for the abolition of African slavery. From this base lukewarmness on the part of these states,—civilized, I suppose, they must be called,—the prospect of perfect freedom to the injured African must still be very far distant.

By the villains employed on board of those vessels engaged in the slave trade, life is held so cheap, and their moral turpitude is so excessive, that the most atrocious crimes are perpetrated, and the most diabolical cruelties inflicted upon the persons of their unoffending captives, with impunity, and without compunction. A frightful instance of this occurred on board the schooner stated in a former page as having been taken by his Majesty's brig Plumper. One of the female slaves, with a chastity of demeanour "above all Greek, all Roman fame," and a purity of heart that would have done honour to the most refined and exalted state of human society, had long and indignantly repulsed the disgusting advances of the master of the schooner, until, at last, the iniquitous wretch, finding himself foiled in his execrable attempts on her person, became furious with disappointment, and murdered his unfortunate and unoffending victim with the most savage cruelty, the details of which are too horrible to be conceived, far less described! And yet these inhuman miscreants, in the event of their vessel being captured, are generally allowed to go

unpunished. We cannot, or at all events we do not, punish them: that is left for the laws of their own country, and they are consequently suffered to escape.

This is but one instance of the numerous unheard of horrors entailed on the native Africans by the slave trade, as it is at present carried on. I shall relate another which also occurred very recently. His Majesty's ship Medina, cruizing off the river Gallinas, descried a suspicious sail, and sent a boat to examine her, the officer of which found her to be fitted for the reception of slaves, but without any on board, and consequently allowed her to proceed on her course. It was discovered some time afterwards, by one of the men belonging to the vessel, that she had a female slave on board when the Medina made her appearance, and knowing that, if found, this single slave would condemn the vessel, the master (*horresco referens*) lashed the wretched creature to an anchor, and ordered it to be thrown overboard! This is an instance of the additional inhumanity indirectly entailed on the slave trade by the benevolent exertions of England. Had our Government been able to obtain from Spain, by the firmness and determination of her remonstrances, permission to seize all vessels under her flag *fitted for the reception of slaves*, this vessel could by no means have escaped, and no object could have been gained by the atrocious murder. As it is, our treaty with Spain limits us to the seizure of vessels with slaves *actually on board;* and this single slave, if found by the Medina, would have made the vessel a legal capture; to prevent which the poor creature was cruelly sacrificed—the life of a slave being considered by these wretches as no better than that of a dog, or one of the brute creation.

But, after all, we do not afford perfect freedom to the liberated Africans. Although located at Sierra Leone, the doom of everlasting banishment from the place of his nativity—from all that is dear to him—still hangs over his devoted head; and freedom with nothing to live for, is but a superficial embelish-

ment to the miseries of a wretched existence. We have it not in our power to return him to his happy home, and reunite him to every loved attachment, from which he has been forcibly separated. To effect this, would be to give him genuine liberty, and would be a balm to all his sorrows; but it is impossible. His country is almost unknown. There are indeed a few Karancoes, Bulloms, and Kussos, who have been generally made slaves in war, that manage to get back to their own country, which is not far distant from Sierra Leone; but these bear a very trifling proportion to the many thousands annually carried from the coast.

On the other hand, if measured by our notions of felicity, the African's home is not a happy one. The state of constant warfare and barbarism among many tribes, make it a question with some persons whether they are not better in their state of demi-freedom at Sierra Leone, or even mancipated to Christian masters, than as slaves to some savage chief in their own native country, subject to be sold or sacrificed, as he may think fit. To men more civilized than they are, however, attachment to their native soil would make even a life of slavery tolerable there.

> Such is the patriot's boast where'er we roam,
> His first, best country ever is at home.

I have often heard individuals affirm, that the enslaved African in a Christian country lives in comparative ease and happiness—that he is happy in a state of slavery and exile. I know that in Brazil the very opposite is the case. The same persons affirm that the African is callous to his removal from his native land. I have observed nothing that would lead me to believe such a melancholy statement. But even if, as the persons affirm, the rude savage, ignorant of the object of his violent seizure, when relentlessly dragged from the home of his fathers, is *barely* sensible of the loss of friends and of his separation from the scenes of his youth, endeared by every fond association, surely they will concede that the slave must

feel his abject condition most accutely, who is blessed by the benign beams of civilization, and improved by residence in a Christian country, has learned to read, and to appreciate the merits of liberty, who feels himself a man, and that he is lorded over by his brother man, and treated by him like the "beasts that perish,"—that he was bought, and may be sold by him? Like the block of marble under the rough hands of the quarryman, we will suppose that he *may*, perhaps, feel but little his violent separation from his parent rock, and may not be in much danger of suffering in his savage state from the buffetings and hard knocks he meets with; but, as the same rough mass of stone gradually swells into life under the inspired chissel of the statuary, so, as civilization advances, does the slave not become more sensible to the harsh grasp of the rude, the ignorant, and unfeeling? and is it not then that the degradation of slavery and all its pangs are most actually felt? and then that freedom is most imperatively demanded, and most highly relished? This will be generally admitted; yet, even here, as in the case of his forcible removal from his country, these irrational advocates of slavery affirm that the African is equally insensible, regardless of his liberty, and incapable of appreciating it. And in both casee, so far as I have been able to observe, the assertions are equally unfounded.

War is, no doubt, fomented among the native tribes in the interior of Africa, on most occasions, for the purpose of dragging the vanquished into slavery; but it is also, if we may believe reports, sometimes entered upon for the mere thirst for combat—for the sake of plunder or revenge; and in that case, unless their is some means of disposing of the captives, they are inhumanly butchered, either on the field, or soon after battle. By affording this means, the slave traffic may have saved some thousands of lives at the expense of liberty. That this has been truly the state of the case occasionally, was ascertained by the officers of his Majesty's ship Primrose, if the following account, brought to Sierra Leone by them, is to be believed; and I have not the slightest reason to doubt its accu-

racy, having made particular inquiry concerning it, although some sapiently sceptical individuals were pleased to question the truth of the statement, because it militated against their own preconceived notions regarding the slave trade. During a short stay at Loango, about a year ago, the king of that place, Rey Mune Lumba, told them, "that if the English would trade for slaves as formerly, he could load eight ships in one week, and give each four or five hundred; but that, having now no means of disposing of the greater part of his prisoners, he was obliged to kill them." And shortly before the Primrose arrived, a great number of unfortunate wretches, who had been taken in a predatory incursion within the territories of a neighboring tribe, in revenge of some imaginary insult, after having been made use of to carry loads of the plundered ivory &c. from the place of capture to the coast, on their arrival there, as there was no market for them, and as the trouble and expense of their support would be considerable, were taken to the side of a hill, a little beyond the town, and coolly knocked on the head! Until Africa, emerge from her present dark state of uncivilized barbarism—a period infinitely farther distant than can ever be conjectured—it would really seem on a first glance at these flagitious practices, that, instead of committing an inhuman act, the persons employed in the slave trade—although how different their object!—actually confer a benefit on the persecuted natives, by removing them from a country where might is right, and murder is no crime. But there cannot be a doubt that the cupidity which the trade gives rise to, serves to augment these enormities, and, together with the imperfect laws enacted against it, adds, as has been already shewn, to the cruel treatment of the individual after he becomes a slave.

Presupposing, therefore, that the statement of the Primrose's officers is correct, and that many reports of a similar nature are founded in truth, it appears that the complete suppression of the slave trade, although it will be the first step towards quieting the distracted state of the interior of Africa, will not, as many suppose, entirely tranquillize the country. It

savage life there will be wars and murder, without the slave trade as an exciting cause; and, besides, the suppression of the slave trade on this part of the African continent, would go but a short way towards the complete abolition of African slavery. Thousands of human beings are annually carried from the interior of this desolated land to the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, Egypt, and the shores of the Mediterranean, concerning whom no interest seems to have been hitherto excited, and for whose amelioration no measures have ever been contemplated.

Besides the abolition of slavery, something else must, therefore, be done to prevent the intestine wars and murderous devastation of Inner Africa, by illuminating the mental darkness of her children. The first step towards this would seem to be an endeavor on the part of our benevolent government, to acquire and keep up a constant and friendly intercourse with the chiefs on the different parts of the coast, and in the interior, for the purpose of obtaining certain stipulations to this end, and introducing teachers, so that the people's minds may be prepared in some measure to receive and understand the doctrines of Christianity. A few presents annually to the chiefs would ensure these benefits to the native African, and many enterprising, enlightened, and philanthropic individuals, might be found in England, willing to risk their lives in furthering so commendable an object.*

But when will the diabolical traffic in human beings, even on this part of the African continent, be annihilated, and the

* The mercantile expedition which has left England, since the above was written, for the newly discovered mouth of the Niger, if successful, will be the commencement of a new era in the history of Africa. By this channel, civilization, which has hitherto but partially illumed its widely-extended coast, will be carried into the heart of the country, and commerce will give the death blow to the interior slave trade, by supplying the powerful chiefs with British manufactures and European luxuries, for the produce of their own country, which they have hitherto chiefly obtained from the Moorish caravans crossing the desert, in exchange for slaves. Industry will thus be fostered—the chief will discover that it is his interest to protect, instead of being a blood-thirsty oppressor, and the traffic in human flesh will die a natural death.

first progression made towards the goal of civilization? For to attempt to humanize Africa before this is done, must be wholly useless. Alas! the period seems as far distant as ever. France will do nothing towards it: under her flag there are ten vessels to one of any other nation engaged in the slave trade. During the month of October last, (1830) his Majesty's brig Black Joke, boarded five French vessels, with one thousand six hundred and twenty-two slaves on board, from the River Bonny alone; and in the month of November following, there were ten French vessels lying in the Old Calabar river, ready to take slaves on board, the smallest of which would embark four hundred. She could not detain one of them: indeed, had her officer strictly attended to the letter, or even the spirit of our feeble treaty with France, (than which nothing requires a more strict revision,) he must have known that he was not permitted even to *board* any vessel under French colours. So complete is the immunity of slave vessels sailing under this flag, owing to the disabilities under which our ships of war labour, and the perfect idleness and inactivity of the Gallic squadron, and so comparatively subversive are the laws enacted against the traffic to *the northward* of the equator by every other power under whose flag it has hitherto been carried on that, before long, there is not a doubt but the *tricolor*,—the banner of liberty—the vindicator of the rights of men!—under whose auspices so many diabolical murders have been perpetrated, such mad acts of injustice committed, and such insults and indignities offered to the sober reasons of half the civilized world—the *tricolor* will, ere long, be the only flag employed to carry on the slave trade, and under this it will flourish, unless France is forced to grant the right of search—at least on the coast of Africa—and the right to capture all vessels under her flag fitted for the reception of slaves, or having slaves actually on board. Our treaty with Portugal is almost equally faulty. By the articles of this treaty, we are disabled from capturing any vessel under Portuguese colours to the southward of the equator, although crowded with slaves.

Were there no obstacles to the suppression of the slave trade

—were every vessel, of whatever nation, found fitted for, or engaged in it, liable to capture—were our squadron on the coast, small as it is, ordered to go on in the glorious work of emancipation, without fear of risk by legal processes and diplomatic squabbles, and entirely unhampered—were the simple unfettered order, "Suppress the slave trade," issued by government to the officer commanding our ships of war here,—there is not the slightest doubt that the trade on this part of the coast would be immediately and permanently put an end to. Not a single vessel could escape us. While it is otherwise, all our exertions are a mere farce—a perfect mockery of emancipation. We liberate a few of those embarked in Spanish vessels, while tens of thousands are embarked, and the vessels allowed insolently to pass us unmolested, under the infamous shelter of the French flag to the northward of the equator, and the Portuguese flag to the southward. Upwards of sixty thousand slaves, it is calculated, are annually exported from Africa. In 1826, we emancipated only two thousand five hundred and sixty-seven; in 1827, two thousand eight hundred and sixty-one; in 1828, three thousand nine hundred and twenty-four; and in 1829, five thousand three hundred and fifty were liberated, being a year of uncommon success, which arose from the great number of Brazilian vessels running prior to the operation of the convention of 1826, which made the trade under the Brazillian flag piracy. Since then, no vessel has appeared under that flag on the coast *—In 1730 the number consequently again fell off; and in the present year little or nothing can be done. Almost every vessel laden with slaves is under the French flag, and the people on board, confident of being privileged, literally laugh at us as they pass, and often favour the escape of vessels under another flag liable to capture, by leading us a dance after them. But, besides the many other impediments to the complete suppression of the slave trade, while the captain's of his Majesty's ships are liable to have damages for the detention of the vessels with slaves on board, which, are subsequently,

* See list of vessels captured, at the end of the volume.

by a decision of the Courts of Mixed Commission, declared, in accordance with the treaties, to be illegally detained, which not unfrequently happens, there must be much hesitation in the minds of these men concerning the detention of vessels whose cases are at all doubtful; and those illegally employed have, no doubt, often been allowed to escape in consequence of the heavy expenses which may be incurred should they not be condemned. It is therefore evident, that all attempts at suppressing the slave trade under the present system is a mere farce,—that all our expenditure for that purpose is fruitlessly—nay, in many instances, injuriously—employed.

CHAPTER IV.

Our recently formed settlement at Fernando Po consists of ten or twelve capacious, airy, whitewashed buildings of wood, ranged along the brow of a somewhat precipitous cliff, forming one side of a narrow strip of land, jutting out like a deformed limb from the island, and terminating abruptly in a shelving point, called Point William, which protects the little bay denominated Clarence Cove, in which we are anchored, from the violence of those heavy squalls, known by the name of tornadoes, so common on this coast. A few of these buildings are occupied by the officers of the establishment, who consist at present of a superintendent, formerly master of a merchant vessel trading here, an ensign of the Royal African Corps, and two naval assistant-surgeons. The rest are used as an hospital, a barrack for the Royal African Corps, and storehouses. Near the point are a few huts, inhabited by the industrious Kroumen employed as labourers; and behind the above range of government buildings is a village of the Africans, liberated and located here by Captain Owen, round which the ground is pretty well cleared, and the gardens in a very fair state of cultivation. The huts are formed in a manner similar to those at Sierra Leone, but are covered with bamboo instead of grass, and wattled by broad and thin pieces of wood instead of twigs, and have not quite so pleasing an appearance. Two public gardens belonging to the establishment, are well laid out, and contain a number of tropical fruit trees and plants, —the one placed on Adelaide Point, west of the Cove; the other behind the principal building in the settlement; which, from its being occupied by the Superintendent, has obtained the name of Government House. There are about one thou-

sand persons in the settlement, including Europeans, of whom there are, at present, only twenty-five; Royal African Corps forty; the rest liberated Africans and Kroumen, with their wives and children. Seven hundred of these black people are employed about the various public works going on, and are paid and fed by Government, provisions being sent out from England for that purpose. The quantity of food reared in the colony is quite insufficient for the support of its inhabitants, so that by any accidental delay in the arrival of a transport from England, they are wholly dependent upon the opposite coast for support, whence they derive a supply of yams and fresh meat. But, notwithstanding, the progress of cultivation in the colony seems to go on very slowly. The utmost extent of the settlement, including the cleared ground, as well as the space occupied by public and private buildings, is barely three miles in circumference. All beyond is a dense forest, the trees of which are of an enormous magnitude, and are found highly useful and substantial in building. The chief of these is a red wood, resembling mahogany, but generally coarser grained, and a dense heavy, and yellowish white wood, which however, has the disadvantage of becoming pithy and splitting or renting after a short time. The *ricinus communis*, or castor oil plant, grows wild in great abundance.

At the head of Maidstone Bay, a little to the westward of the settlement, there is some low, swampy ground,—three or four muddy, sluggish brooks, bordered by many hundred acres of mangrove and jungle, extending, in some instances, even to the very centre of the dull stream, as is the case in most other African rivers. The vapours from these must be most injurious to health, particularly as the sea breeze blows directly over them before it reaches the Cove. Also, to the eastward of the town, there is a stagnant pool at no great distance—a narrow running stream or two, and some low, wet land of a similar description to that in the neighbourhood of Maidstone Bay; but neither merit the name of a marsh, although, perhaps, equally injurious to health. In fact, so far as salubrity is concerned, it appears to me that no worse situ-

ation for the settlement could have been found upon the island. The sickly earthy smell, which I spoke of at Porto Antonio, and the effluvium of dead and decaying vegetable matter at Sierra Leone, are at this settlement, most powerful and offensive, particularly when the wind blows off shore, which it very generally does during the night. At present, the cases of fever in the hospital are very numerous; and besides these there are a great number of patients afflicted with ulcers, said, by the medical people on shore, (who affect to be very sanguine as to the salubrity of the island,) to have been contracted on different parts of the continent, and brought here in merchant vessels for cure. In opposition to this, however, I have seven Kroumen at present under my care, who belonged to his Majesty's ship Medina, afflicted with extensive phagedenic ulcers of the most obstinate nature, all of which were originally scratches, met with while cutting firewood on the island, and none of which, although dressed almost immediately, and strictly attended to, ever shewed any tendency to heal; and with respect to the production of fever, the facts above stated are sufficiently conclusive. The purser of the Atholl narrowly escaped death, and has been sent home that his life may be preserved. The man sent on board here from the tender has recovered, but continues in such a debilitated state that he, too, must ultimately be sent to England.

No beasts of prey have been seen on the island. A small species of deer is rather plentiful; but by no means delicate or rich in flavour. Numbers of these are brought in every Saturday by the workmen, who are allowed the afternoon, as a half-holiday, when each shoulders a musket, and turns sportsman. A large species of monkey is also brought in for sale, which is used as food by the blacks in the settlement, and considered by them as excellent eating. The whole of the bullocks in the settlement are brought over from the river Calabar, although it is reported that there are plenty of wild cattle in the mountains. This, however, I believe to be doubtful, as they have never been seen by any person belonging to the settlement. The former are very small — from sixty to one

hundred and sixty pounds each — though the beef is very good. The whole of the goats, pigs, and poultry, are also brought over from the continent; but barely enough for the use of the inhabitants. So few, indeed, can be spared, that it is with difficulty we can now and then obtain a castrated goat, to supply the place of mutton. Before we had an establishment at this place, the natives sold yams and poultry, in the greatest abundance, to ships touching here, and at an uncommonly reasonable rate: now yams are not to be had; and a lean fowl sells for a dollar. This is one of the first advantages of colonization. Of the birds, the rhinoceros, or helmet hornbill, and a large bird, called the Fernando Po pheasant, about the same size and shape of the pheasant of Britain, with brown and black feathers, a black crest, and a short broad yellow beak, are the most remarkable, and are very numerous. The call of the former resembles the braying of an ass, being almost equally loud and discordant, to contribute to which, Nature has, no doubt, placed the immense unseemly protuberance on the beak from which it receives its name. The two-horned chameleon is also frequently met with in the woods. The water of Clarencetown, Fernando Po, is by no means bad, whatever may have been said to the contrary; but the supply is not sufficient to meet a large and hurried demand, such as is often necessarily made by our ships of war. This, however, will soon be remedied, as a cistern is building over the streamlet a little to the westward of the public buildings, in which the water will be collected. There being considerable inconvenience and difficulty experienced by ships in watering at the running stream, on the opposite side of the settlement, that is almost always made use of. But the water is certainly not the best in the world: it is not to be compared to that of Prince's Island; and, accordingly, all our ships of war prefer supplying themselves from thence when it is at all possible. A sort of Justice Court is held here twice a week, for the purpose of settling disputes among the black residents—the office of arbiter or judge on these occasions being performed by each of the officers of the settlement in

succession; and a ridiculous enough scene it is sometimes! On Sunday, every one employed on the establishment is made to attend at Longfield House, a public storehouse, where, for the present, the Superintendent performs divine service. The clean, neat and orderly appearance of the blacks, and the decent attention paid by them on these occasions to the solemn service in which they are engaged, call forth the encomiums of every one who has witnessed them. I wonder that some of the numerous religious societies at home have not, before this, sent out here a few of their members in the good work of conversion, or that some pious person, eager after religious fame, has not, before this time, had zeal enough to venture out of his own accord. It is not, surely, because the climate is deadly and pestilential?

The aboriginal inhabitants of the island, (who have obtained the name of boobies and coccoolacoos from their new neighbours, owing to certain words which they are in the frequent habit of making use of when they desire to be friendly,) are a strong, active, vivacious, and shrewd race of men, but by no means industrious; for nature produces all the necessaries of life in abundance, with so little cultivation, that labour and exertion are almost matters of supererogation. Covetousness and impudence appear to be the two most prominent features in their character—filth and stench, in consequence of their present mode of dress, are peculiarities inseparable from their persons. Their visits to the new settlement are very frequent; but are never made, unless it is to beg for something—whatever they see, and deem curious and useful, such as axes, muskets, fish-hooks, nails, old iron, &c. Bodies of fifteen or twenty—chiefs and their "tails"—make their appearance on these occasions; and after getting all they can from the intruders on their soil, they march back into the interior, without burdening the doners with their thanks, or even shewing that they have any sense of the obligation. There is, however, a very friendly understanding between them and the persons connected with our establishment, who venture frequently many miles into the interior, and feel

themselves perfectly safe among them. Those of the natives that I have seen near the coast, seem very jealous of a near approach to their houses, which are mere sheds formed of a few upright poles, and a roof of bamboo or grass, containing numbers of small hand-nets, calabashes, fishing-rods, wooden spears, &c. They were always on the begging system, importuning us for rum, (the name of which they seem to have got very ready,) and whatever else we had about us. In these huts, trees hollowed out in the form of troughs, served the purposes of beds, in which they sleep dry and safe from the pools of water on each side, during the heavy periodical rains. They always shake hands on meeting and at parting,—a barbarous custom, also practised by civilized nations of the north, from whom, I suppose, it is derived. The females are, in general, very shy and reserved. In practising the above custom, they shrink from a near approach, or any thing like close contact, and stretch out their right arm at full length, keeping the extremes of the body as far removed from the individual so favoured, as its elasticity will permit. A chaste salute would be no such desirable matter, coated, as they are, with clay and palm oil. But for all this affected modesty, several of them, doffing their ornamental dress of oil and clay, have come to the settlement, where they are at present living with the Kroumen in a state of concubinage; in consequence of which they are *cut* by their friends and countrymen. These are the only signs of an approach to the practices of civilized society which I have observed amongst them.

Numbers of their canoes are seen paddling daily towards some favourite fishing ground, armed with long barbed or crenated spears of tough wood, and small hand-nets, the principal weapons with which they make war upon the finny tenants of the deep. A hook to them is a treasure, and, with a line attached to it, is the handsomest "dash"* one can make to a native of Fernando Po. These canoes are all or-

* "Dash" is the word used among the blacks all along the coast, in their strange jargon, for "a present."

namented with rude carved work externally. The stern is irregularly square, "swims in the water," and still shews the marks of the rude axe, which levelled the tree out of which it had been formed, while the prow, in which there is always placed upright a long slender reed, having a tuft of dry grass dangling from its waving top, and another near its middle, by way of *fetiche*, rises at a very acute angle from the water, and overhangs it for several feet almost horizontally, terminating in a sharp or rounded point. Several of these poor fishermen came unhesitatingly on board, and paid us a visit, some days after our arrival. The leading men in these canoes were usually the tallest and best looking individuals of the motley crew, a remark which also applies to the chiefs on shore, who are in general much taller, more muscular, active, and shrewd than their humbler countrymen. The moment they came or board, they seemed to make themselves quite at home; very coolly walked down below to the gun-room, and demanded something to drink, in which they were humoured. They then made signs that they wanted to take our cups on shore with them to drink out of, but this could not be so readily granted, there being no porcelain manufactory on the coast of Africa; and they evinced some impatience at our refusal; but they soon regained their equanimity.

Watchaco, the chief of the first canoe that came on board, called by the seamen "Happy Jack," from his lively manner and remarkable *nonchalance*, and Woussa, one of his men, affording pretty good specimens of the costume and character of their countrymen, I shall attempt to describe their general appearance. Besmeared, from head to foot, with a reddish clay mixed with palm oil, their hair in thick plaits, matted with the same, and dangling in solid lumps half-way down the neck, they presented a most foul appearance, while their bodies exhaled a most noisome and offensive odour. Their heads were covered with dirty saucer-shaped hats of straw, rather finely platted, fastened on by means of

an iron skewer stuck through the hat, and the greasy wool of their crowns. Watchaco's was ornamented with numerous dark-coloured, dirty feathers, and bits of bullock's horn intermingled. The face of each was full of horizontal cicatrices, about two inches in length, and half and inch broad, from ornamental wounds inflicted with some sharp instrument during childhood—certainly a most painful series of operations. The eyes peered through a mound of clay raised round the socket, and the layer of filth on the face was distinguishable by the numerous cracks and *scoriæ* on its surface. Besides these facial embellishments, which add considerably to their savage appearance, each had numerous tattoed marks on the surface of the abdomen, round the naval, and also over the scapulæ, or shoulder blades. Twisted rings of straw and hide, studded with small bits of shell and beads, ornamented their necks, arms, waists, and lower extremities; and a small mat of straw, or a tuft of grass, and a piece of monkey skin, with the hair outwards, fastened round the middle by strings of beads or straps of leather, barely sufficed to cover that which decency requires to have concealed. The chiefs on shore are generally distinguished by the size of these decorations; many of them having their waists and extremities circled with belts of shells and beads several inches in breadth. They are likewise distinguished from the "mobility" by the larger number of feathers in their hats, and by a staff which they are seldom or never without, six or seven feet long, surmounted with feathers, and a variety of *fetiches*. Many of the natives whom I have seen on shore had the hair shaved from the back of the head, temples, and upper part of the forehead. Others had the whole hair cut quite short, with the exception of a small upright tuft just above the forehead; and nearly all carried a rude knife, stuck between the skin and the ring of shells, or straw, which encircled the left arm, immediately above the elbow. The women are dressed and ornamented in a manner nearly similar; their only covering is, in general, a leaf. Canoes occasionally pass the ship, paddled by females

alone, quite as loquacious as any coterie of the same number of their better clothed and fairer sex in England. So much for their costume.

As I have already said, no one could justly accuse Watchaco and his followers of modesty or diffidence; for they asked for every thing, and drank as much spirits as they could get—and that was a quantity sufficient to have intoxicated twice as many hard-headed, whisky-drinking Scotsmen; but although they gulped it down undiluted, it seemed to have no more effect upon them than as much water, and they demanded more. They did not offer any to their fellows in charge of the canoe, lying alongside, but seemed afraid, while they were drinking on deck, lest these should come up and ask a share of the potent draught; and accordingly they swallowed the whole as fast as possible, casting their eyes to the gangway occasionally, to see whether they were observed. Each spoke a word or two of English, and asked repeatedly after Captain Owen, who they all seem to regard with much respect and estoem. They tried to imitate us in every thing—walking the deck beside us—laughing when we did—and making use of the same gestures, and repeating, as nearly as they were able, the order given on board, in the same tone and manner. We furled sails just as they left the ship, when the officer carrying on the duty hailed the main-top for some purpose or other,—"Main-top there!" was vehemently re-echoed from the canoe. The officer was again under the necessity of loudly execrating the optics of some poor devil who had come under his severe displeasure, as is customary in nautical operations,—"D—n your eyes!" was immediately vociferated from the canoe, with the most ludicrous mimicry of the same angry tone and gesticulation, which they themselves seemed to relish so much, that they all burst into a loud laugh, as if in derision of our barbarous and uncivilized gabble, and then paddled on shore, apparently much pleased with their visit.

The soil of this island is eminently superior to that of the peninsula of Sierra Leone, and the extent of arable surface is infinitely greater. From its vast height, it must have various climates,—an advantage which the diminutive mountains of Sierra Leone do not possess. Like all new settlements within the tropics, it must and will be unhealthy, until the ground is cleared, drained, and cultivated; and those who, being first on the soil, have to perform the laborious operations, must make up their minds to pay the penalty of their adventurousness with loss of health and life, while those who succeed them must reap the benefit of their exertions; but it may, at some distant period, have this advantage over Sierra Leone, inconsiderable as it may be thought, namely—a retreat formed in a temperate climate, high up the mountain, where the sick could be sent for recovery, as is the case in the Blue Mountains of Jamaica; although an obstacle might be suggested to this in the great distance of the high land from the present situation of the settlement. The loss of life before this can be effected must be enormous; and the question to be considered is, whether the advantage to be derived from it is worth the sacrifice. This is the great, and only objection to a settlement at Fernando Po; but even the existence of the dreadful fatality of its climate is denied in the most barefaced manner, in opposition to the strongest and most undeniable facts, by some silly individuals, whose senses are warped by the interesting medium through which they view the subject. I learn that the order-book of one of these very persons, who for same time did the duty of superintendent, is still to be seen here, and contains the two following orders, as nearly verbatim as I can remember, both of which are strongly corroborative of his sentiments regarding the healthful enjoyments of the inhabitants of Clarencetown, Fernando Po. He had divided his working people into gangs, which were numbered, and ordered upon different duties, in the following manner: "Gang No. 1, to be employed in digging graves as usual—Gang No. 2, making coffins till farther orders!"

There is ground enough to locate many more than all the slaves we shall ever liberate, without interfering with, or affecting, the interests of the natives, who, I have reason to believe, are by no means so numerous as has been represented. The number has been estimated at forty thousand; but any such calculation must be altogether arbitrary. Besides the assistance which the island may afford to our cruizers engaged in suppressing the slave trade, no one can shut his eyes to the advantages which the island, were it not for its fatality, might ultimately possess as a commercial station. It is a key to all the magnificent streams which, traversing the undiscovered continent of Africa, empty themselves into the Bight of Biafra. The possibility of penetrating these with the assistance of steam, and the probability of acquiring much information that is interesting in the imperfect history of the interior, as well as of discovering many sources of wealth hitherto unheard of, are matters by no means Utopian. Few slave vessels can arrive in those rivers without the occurrence being speedily known at the island, by means of the constant communication kept up with the main, chiefly by Liverpool traders, and their tenders, or through the medium of two colonial schooners, which are in the habit of making frequent visits there, for the purpose of obtaining a supply of yams and live stock for the use of the settlement. It was owing to this constant communication that the Black Joke received intelligence of, and was consequently enabled to capture, the Marinerito; and she is about to proceed to cruize off the river Bonny, in consequence of information, similarly received, of a Spanish brig and schooner lying there, ready to take slaves on board. But under the existing laws relative to the slave trade, this advantage which the island possesses is of secondary consideration. This very intelligence which is about to despatch the tender, serves to shew the humbug and inefficiency of the laws and treaties having for their object the suppression of the slave trade. Here are two vessels fitted for the reception of slaves, and anchored at a notorious slave

port, ready to take on board their wretched victims, whenever he num ber which it is possible to crowd into their holds shall be brought from the interior; and we, although fully aware that they are so fitted, and that such is their intention, cannot egally pre vent the inhuman act; when, with the greatest ease imaginable, were the dictates of humanity not obstructed by the cold-blooded arm of the law, our tender, or our boats might enter the river, capture or destroy them, and thereby effectually prevent them from accomplishing their nefarious purpose. But no: the poor Africans must be suffered to be collected together in the "factory," like cattle, until the numerous cargo is completed—we must suffer them to be shipped and subjected to every horror, and to all the degradation of the slavehold—we must permit, and, in a manner, countenance a crime, which we know is about to be perpetrated, of the most diabolical nature, when it might be so easily prevented! Were the commanders of his Majesty's ships, as I have said before, to act otherwise, the most heavy pecuniary penalties would be awarded against them by the law. Therefore, until, as has been already said, the slave trade shall be held, by a law of nations, to be piracy, and until all vessels found fitted for the purpose of carrying it on shall be held to have actually engaged in it, all our efforts to put a stop to the vile traffic must be entirely fruitless. The establishment of the Courts of Mixed Commission at Fernando Po, under the present treaties, must be an act highly serviceable to the cause of humanity, so far as the slaves are concerned; but I question whether the members of these courts would think its interests consulted in their own case. To these courts, every slave vessel captured must be sent for adjudication; and as the principal marts for carrying on the trade are the ports and rivers in the Bights of Benin and Biafra, near this island, the slaves might then be all landed, and submitted for adjudication, two or three days after capture; whereas, the passage thence to Sierra Leone, where the Courts at present reside, occupies usually three weeks or a month—and instances have

been known of three months—during which, as will be seen by the list of captures appended to the volume, the mortality is often frightful—diseases from crowding and privations of every description, make most appalling ravages. To be sure, the trade is pretty extensively carried on in the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone; but then; the passage thence to Fernando Po does not occupy much more than one-half the period which it does in the other direction—the winds being generally favourable.

In point of insalubrity, I believe there is not such a very material difference between this island and Sierra Leone, as has been represented. They are both bad enough in that respect. The older residents at Sierra Leone were tormented with ague: so are they here. Occasional cases of remittent fever occurred, and occasional deaths in consequence: so have they here, as we have already seen; but it must be recollected, that the whites are as nothing in point of numbers to those at Sierra Leone. It is pretty well established, I believe, that the better and more extensively cleared a tropical country is of wood, jungle, and swamp, the better it is drained, and the better cultivated, it is proportionately more healthy, whatever may be the impalpable cause of fever. All this has yet to be effected at Fernando Po. At Sierra Leone, a very great part of this has been done, but not so much as one would have been led to expect from the remote period of its establishment as a colony; therefore, the insalubrity of its climate may be, in proportion, less than that of its rival establishment at Fernando Po. Where both are so very bad, it is a matter of some nicety to say, with confidence, which is worst. Of this, however, I am, on the strongest evidence, and from all that I have observed myself, perfectly satisfied that the boasted salubrity of Fernando Po is totally without foundation; but as our visits here will be frequent, there will be no want of opportunities of clearly ascertaining whether this be the fact or not. I am told by the present Superintendent, that, during the whole of last year, they had a hundred and thirty-three

days with occasional heavy showers, but no long-continued rain. At Sierra Leoné, I was also told, that the rain continued for as least as long a period, and that it poured down sometimes for two or three days without intermissions—without even a gleam of sunshine.

We left Fernando Po on the 11th May, and, after a short and unsuccessful cruize to the westward, as far as Cape St Paul's, for the purpose of intercepting slave vessels, we stood away for the Island of Anobona, where we arrived on the 29th. During the whole of this time we had almost perpetual rain; and, as the ship wanted caulking, from the shrinking of the wood by the preceding five or six months' exposure to a hot sun, our very cabins were inundated, our books rendered nearly illegible, and almost every article we possessed was more or less injured. This is another and unlooked for misery added to the accumulation of pests to which we are subject on this miserable coast.

The Island of Anabona—in one degree twenty-two minutes south latitude, five degrees twenty-seven minutes forty-nine seconds east longitude—is about twenty-four miles in circumference, and its summit from two thousand to three thousand feet high. Its appearance, as we approach, is remarkably pleasing. Without either the romantic rocky outline of Prince's Island, or the deep forest shade of Fernando Po, its sunbright surface is surmounted by a few craggy and conical eminences, while its sloping sides consist of undulating hills, many of which are almost free from wood, and covered with waiving grass embrowned by the sun, forming bright yellow glades, which relieve the deep green of the spreading groves and clumps of trees covering the other hills in their vicinity. These hills are intersected with dells and ravines, shaded with numerous tall trees and leafy shrubs,—deep and wide gullies formed by the original convulsion of Nature, but now bearing in their bosom the placid brook, or affording a bed to the rushing mountain torrents during the periodical rains. In

many places the island is steep and precipitous from the very beach. At others the ascent is more gradual; but, excepting a few acres in two or three places close to the sea shore, there is little or no level land, so far as I could observe, on the whole island.

We anchored near a considerable village, at the north-east end of the island. Upwards of one hundred and fifty canoes came out to meet us and "make trade;" bringing pigs, poultry, goats, eggs, yams, sweet potatoes, pine apples, bananas, plantains, limes, oranges, tamarinds, cassava bread, (in large, round, flat cakes, which many of the natives had placed upon their heads in room of hats, to keep the sun off,) dried fish, sponges, and shells. The canoes are formed of the trunks of trees hollowed, and coarsely executed. Most of them contained two or three individuals, tall, athletic blacks, having nothing different in their appearance from the natives of the coast, excepting that they had gold rings in their ears, beads and crosses, or rosaries, round their necks, and that they were all dressed in ragged shirts and trowsers, which they had obtained from vessels touching here, in exchange for provisions and articles of refreshment. Many of them spoke a few words of English, and the Portuguese language seemed to be pretty generally, but very imperfectly, understood. They are all of the religion of the Portuguese, who discovered and long retained the island, but afterwards ceded it to Spain, who has never had any footing on it whatever, so that at present there is not a single European resident or civilized person of any description on the island. The constant gabbling noise and clamour which, in their zeal to trade, the ragged inmates of the numerous canoes raised round the ship, was most deafening. Money seemed to be of no value, for they would not receive it, but looked upon old clothes as the staple commodity. Shirts, trowsers, and handkerchiefs were most in demand; but they seemed to have no idea of the relative value of these articles, and took especial care to give as little as

possible for every thing, shewing an uncommon degree of cunning and shrewdness on all occasions, and a marked wish to impress us with a deep sense of their poverty,—"*Me poor fellow!*" was in every one's mouth. At length the King (who calls himself "Tom Standay, or Scandey") came on board, in a canoe, which shewed no superiority over the others in point of size or ornament. His majesty was a tall, thin personage, considerably on the wrong side of fifty. He was dressed in the cast off garments of some merchant skipper, viz. an old black beaver, blue coat, duck trowsers, reaching scarcely to the middle of his leg, cotton stockings, that might once have been white and sound, but where now rather dingy, like his skin, and full of holes, with shoes of a most ponderous construction. He was distinguished from the *canaille* in the other canoes by a coarse cotton umbrella, of English manufacture, and was accompanied by only one attendant, who seemed to stick always close to the old gentleman, and gave himself out to be "Cocoa Jack," the King's Physician. This man of influence, while he basked in the smiles of royalty, afforded, even in savage life, an admirable specimen of the fawning, courtly sycophant. While he enjoyed his share of the good things, he seemed to have little regard for the feelings of his humbler brethren in the canoes, to whom he evinced a rooted antipathy, urging the weak old gentleman to thrust them out of his way, and to offer them other indignities in his passage alongside. The canoe-men seemed to burn with indignation; but their murmurs were scarcely listened to, although the frown of ineffable contempt met the pampered favourite on every side. His Majesty was ushered into the Commodore's cabin, where, after speedily discussing, with the assistance of his henchman, two or three bottles of wine, he was presented with a shirt, a dressing-gown, and a green night-cap, all of which he donned instantly, stripping to the buff, for that purpose, in the presence of every one, without the slightest ceremony. We afterwards introduced him to the gun-room, but had good reason to repent of our complaisance. As long as there was any thing to drink, he did not

evince the slightest inclination to budge one inch, and we were at length obliged, very unceremoniously, to hand him over the side, pretty nearly as drunk as a lord, to use a commoner's expression.

Some time after King Tom left the ship, a few of us went on shore, and looked round the village. As there was a heavy surf on the sandy beech, we landed on some rocks to the right of the town, which form a sort of natural pier, and got on terra firma without the slightest difficulty. By his umbrella—which he always had expanded for his distinction's sake, whether the sun was bright or clouded, whether it was noon or night —we observed his Majesty King Tom Standey, in the midst of a dense multitude of his black and ragged subjects, approaching to meet us. Before we had gone far, we were surrounded by at least fifteen hundred persons, men, women, and children, dressed every one according to his own fashion, in the cast off clothes of their civilized visitors. The poorer sort, however, and the women, had only the usual rag round the middle, and the children were perfectly naked. Here was one fellow with a tattered dress coat, and no other habiliment but the above-mentioned rag, or *doty*—there another whose sole garment consisted of a cloak of shreds and patches, which, from its "cut," must have once seen better company—and yonder a party of "bloods," I suppose, by their dress being different from that of the more sober part of the community, consisting of inexpressibles only, but arranged in the most novel and fanciful manner, the legs being tied round the loins, and the waist and hinder parts of the garment hanging down before. His majesty, expecting a few presents, received us very graciously, and conducted us—surrounded, and half choaked in the clouds of dust raised by all the subjects living in the vicinity of his court, collectively—to his royal residence, a wretched hovel, differing in no respect from the other huts in the village, where we were regaled with palm wine. A rude table was placed under the still ruder verandah of boughs

before his door, and three or four chairs, of a construction quite unique, were placed around this for our party. A dirty cloth was then laid, which had once apparently been a sheet, appertaining, perhaps, to the bed linen of some drunken skipper, and on this were placed two or three jugs and a tumbler, which one might conclude, from their appearance, had never been washed since they became the property of these unsophisticated oscii. These were filled with the fermented juice of the palm, and we necessarily partook of it, his majesty setting us an excellent example, by quaffing a copious draught, and nodding us a welcome, with regal condecension; while his subjects in myriads surrounded the verandah, within three feet of us, shouldering each other, and almost suffocating us with heat, dust, and the peculiar offensive odour proceeding from their filthy carcasses, and stunning us with the incessant, loud and discordant clatter of their tongues. They seemed to pay very little defference to the kingly authority. If one might judge from the noise and confusion, the general appearance of equality, the furious intrusion on the king's privacy, and some other mob manifestations of the excellence of liberty, there must certainly be a strong republican feeling among the subjects of his Majesty of Anabona, who, I was informed by the priest, or padre of the village, bears his blushing honours for no longer than a twelvemonth. He is elected annually; but should as many as ten vessels arrive at the island before his year of authority expires, he must resign, and another is appointed to hold the reigns of government. This seems a mighty singular sort of anomaly in the forms of government and is accounted for by the following circumstance. The only revenue which this chief, president, or king, or whatever else he may be called, receives, arises from the presents made to him by those vessels which, like ourselves, happen to touch here for refreshments, it being an invariable practice throughout the whole coast of Africa to give the chief personage a "dash" on arriving and taking leave; and as this is the only

means the king of this island of has acquiring riches, it is wisely provided that no single individual of the community shall grow too opulent, least he also grow supercilious, and despise his poorer countrymen; but that all may have an equal chance of profiting by what fortune may throw in their way. The presents from ten vessels are therefore considered by the community to be quite a large enough share of the loaves and fishes for one individual, and on the departure of the tenth he is superseded; consequently there is no zeal wanting on his part in soliciting gifts, and making most of the present opportunity of adding to his revenue. The importunities of his Majesty King Tom were, in consequence, most troublesome, and his impudence and assurance were occasionally most diverting, as will be presently seen.

We were given to understand by the King that a Spanish slave vessel having put in here some time ago, the crew of which having inveigled many of the natives on board to trade tied them hand and foot, and put them in the hold; and, after murdering several people, and committing other excesses on shore, carried them off. The degree of distrust and fear with which many of them, particularly the women and children, received us, may perhaps have been owing to this. They shewed an innate horror of weapons of any sort, particularly fire-arms. A few of them had large knives stuck in a belt fastened round their waist, but I saw no other sort of weapon among them. We sometimes took advantage of their terrors for the purpose of keeping them at a distance; and while we were pacing the different streets of the village; closely surrounded and annoyed by upwards of a thousand of them, one of our party amused himself by playing upon their fears in the following manner. He suddenly stopped and fixed an angry look on the nearest of the dense mass. They likewise stopped, looked at each other and at him, and shrank back a little, while he continued his look of displeasure, and gradually raised his hand to his pocket as if in search of a weapon; they then fairly took to their heels, made one desperate rush, and tumbled over each other in

their haste to get out of the way, when he withdrew his snuff box from his pocket, and, laughing at the success of his exploit, took a hearty pinch; at which they all returned, joining heartily in the laugh at their own ridiculous fears, made him empty his box among them, and surrounded us, to our great discomfort, much more closely, and with much more confidence, than they had done before. Several of them made anxious inquiries concerning Captain Boteler, who died on this coast some time ago, in command of his Majesty's surveying vessel Hecla, and evinced much concern when I informed them of his death After taking leave of King Tom, whose avarice seemed to be as boundless as the ocean which encompassed his island throne, we returned to the ship.

The houses of this humble village are all miserable hovels, formed of boards fixed in the ground, roofed with bamboo or grass, and consisting of two apartments, with hardly any furniture besides a few boards to sleep on, a coarse table, some chairs or stools, and a few calabashes or jugs to eat and drink out of. The village is placed just above the sea beach: and although of no very considerable size, yet, from what we saw and experienced, it must contain a very numerous population. The houses are placed irregularly, and, with few exceptions, have no gardens adjoining, the cultivated ground being on the sides of the hills just above them. The streets, such as they are, are wide and eminently filthy, and crowded with various kinds of domestic animals, such as dogs, goats, hogs, poultry, &c. To the right of the village stands the church, a large remarkable shed, and the only remarkable building in the place, formed of plank, and thatched like the huts, but occupying as much space as ten or twelve of the latter.

There is something connected with a place devoted to religious worship, however humble, and whatever may be the form of the religion cherished within its walls, for which no one can actually *feel* scorn or contempt, let his expressions and his demeanour savour ever so much of ridicule. Howev-

er gorgeous or paltry, rational or absurd, the appliances and means of each may be, they have all but one and the same end, namely, the worship of a Supreme Being—of some incomprehensible essence—concerning whose attributes and power, the wisest of us, in our insolence of reason, can literally know nothing. We were unable to resist a feeling of veneration and respect, as we entered this sacred edifice—the poorest and most lowly of all which the "Scarlet Lady" can claim as her own; but it was impossible to repress a smile—certainly not a sneer—at the clumsily carved, coarsely painted, and tawdry dressed, little figures of Saints, which were placed at one end of the long empty shed, on a sort of elevated platform, surrounded by a rough wooden pailing, which served the purpose of an altar. Polichinello and his associates are models of art to these. There was, however, one figure of the crucifixion carved in ivory, and beautifully executed, which had most probably been brought over from Brazil by the priests, who were, in general, educated there when the Portuguese had possession of the island. The priest, or rather padre, of the village, an old black, dressed in a cassock of coarse blue and gray striped cloth, who could neither read nor write, but seemed to possess more influence among his demi-savage flock than even his Majesty King Tom, introduced us into his sanctum sanctorum behind the altar, and shewed us several trunks, containing the tawdry vestments, and other trappings of popish ceremony, and a few books in the Portuguese language, among which I found a treatise on the sacraments, upwards of one hundred years old. These things have most probably remained here since the Portuguese evacuated the island, although this, too, is doubtful; for Brazilian vessels, engaged in the slave trade, were in the frequent habit of touching here for water and fresh supplies, until the year before last, when the trade under that flag became piracy.

No place appeared to be sacred from the noisy intrusion of the natives but this little spot within the pailing which sur-

rounds the altar. They had followed and surrounded us every where, but here they stopped, and some of them crossed themselves, and seemed to mutter something like a prayer, and shewed a degree of awe and reverence which I had not given them credit for. On leaving the church, I encountered a person calling himself the schoolmaster, who I also afterwards found could neither read nor write, but was much in want of pens, ink, and paper, to enable him, as he told me by way of explanation, the better to teach the "picaninnys b–a, ba—b–e, be—bo, bo." In this consisted all his knowledge of a schoolmaster's duty.

These poor people appear to be fond of imitating European manners and customs; and it seems to me, that as the Portuguese had a priest and didasculus when in possession of the island, they have thought it necessary, in the simplicity of their emulation, to continue the form at least, because it is European, and gives the person so denominated a certain degree of consequence, although they are entirely ignorant of almost every thing connected with the duties of their offices. They have had delivered down to them by their predecessors some of the forms of religion, and a sprinkling of the methods of education practised by their first civilized masters, as well as some account of the deference paid by them to the professors of religion and education, and perhaps think that by continuing such forms, they obtain favour in the sight of their white visitors, determined at least to resemble them in some things, though they appear to be considered superior to themselves in most matters. I see no other way of accounting for this kind of schoolboy's game among them, of Priest and Pedagogue, the present individuals, so called, being little better than the half-naked savages I have just attempted to describe —of course deplorably ignorant, and incapable of imparting any instruction, having themselves had no opportunity of obtaining it. The priest told us that there were several other villages on the island, but none so large as this. We found that nine of the prize's crew, lately taken by the Black Joke,

and landed here by the Atholl, had gone in three canoes, to endeavour to reach the Island of St. Thomas, and that the rest were still here, and busily employed constructing a boat to carry them to the same place. They derived their chief subsistence by the sale of their clothes (of which they had a good supply) to the natives for provisions, and were lodged in the different huts of the village.

After getting on board, I made an engagement with one of my messmates, to start early in the morning for the highest part of the island, where we understood there was a fresh water lake situated, and such magnificent scenery to be met with, as would repay us for all the trouble and fatigue of the undertaking. Accordingly, taking a fowling-piece each, and a couple of Kroumen belonging to the ship to attend us, we started at six o'clock, and, not knowing of any road or pathway, took a direct course up the steep acclivity behind the village. After passing through some groves of guava trees, abounding in ripe fruit, we entered a large space of several hundred acres, on the side of the mountain, devoid of trees, and covered with loose masses of cinder and lava, the interstices and decomposed parts of which were prolific in rank weeds and long rye-grass. Here we roused up several wild guinea fowl, and let fly a few shots among them, but barely near enough, with our small "sparrow hail," to "ruffle their feathers." Passing this, we had to cross two very deep, precipitous, and dark ravines, which were luckily for us, beset pretty thickly with trees and shrubs, by clinging to which, we scrambled up and down their steep sides, without breaking our necks. Here we shot some wood-pigeons, whose noisy cooings indicated that they were pretty numerous among the bushes and clefts. The bottom of these dens and gloomy recesses of nature were dried up; but, from the broad beds of large washed stones which they contained, the water from the hills must rush through them in the rainy months with immense impetuosity and volume. Surmounting these obstacles, we at length stumbled on a narrow foot-

path winging up the mount, through numerous small plantations of cassada and pine apples, which conducted us to the verge of the desired object of our expedition. On reaching this, and looking back at the direct ascent we had pursued, the distance we were from the village did not seem to exceed a mile and a half; although, from the difficulties we met with in threading our way through the long grass, in some places six feet high, and in penetrating the thick brushwood, the enterprise had occupied nearly two hours, and cost us not a few bruises, and cuticular abrasions; but we were amply repaid for all. The scenery which presented itself to our admiring gaze, on the first glimmering of the lake's smooth white bosom, through the dense and deep green foliage of the trees fringing the sloping margin of the vast mountain basin which contained it, was splendid beyond description. We had mounted a mile and a half of the direct steep ascent from the village, and we now stood upon the crest of a sloping bank, covered with bushes, lofty palms, and cultivated groves of orange trees and plantains, through which we could see the expansive sheet of water, placid as the evening sky of autumn, without a cloud, and glistening through the dark bosom of the forest, like the bright moonbeams as they penetrate the chinks and cracks which time has made in the walls of some dark, desolate, and tottering ruin. Down this we rushed about fifty yards, and stood with our feet at the very brink of the lake, and inhaled with much enjoyment the cool refreshing breeze that gently rippled over its quiet surface, parched and heated as we were by our exertions, and the close and sickly atmosphere of the woods we had just passed. But even here we could only see a small part of the opposite shore, the different species of palms, parasites, acacias, &c. hung over, and grew out of, its margin, in such countless numbers, and so closely interwoven, in every direction. I mounted one of these, but nature had been so unsparing of her leafy ornaments, that some noble specimen of verdant luxuriance was constantly interposed between me

and a full view of the whole extent of the lake. Almost despairing of success, I descended, and traversed a footpath describing its circumference, and at length discovered two or three canoes, in a little creek, under some bushes, from which one of the natives, on seeing us, rushed to the woods in great alarm; but the young savage returned when he heard us laughing and calling to him, and saw us making signs that we wished to be friendly. This rencontre was quite unexpected. All had hitherto been so still and calm that we imagined there was not a single living creature near us. Taking advantage, however, of the discovery, I leapt into one of the crazy barks, taking with me my Krou attendant, and paddled to the middle of the lake, from which I had an excellent view of the surrounding scenery, and of the lagoon itself, in all its bearings, owing to its circular shape. It is nearly three miles in circumference, and lies in a deep cup-shaped concavity, formed by the surrounding hills, the steep internal acclivity of which is clothed with one continued unbroken grove, and terminates in a circular ridge of unequal height, o'ertopped by trees, the loftiest part of which is on the south-west side of the bason, or the side opposite to that on which we entered, and is, with the exception of a conical mount in its vicinity, the loftiest part of the island that can be seen from the anchorage, being about five or six hundred feet in height from the brink of the lake. From the outside of this circular ridge, and beyond the eastern boundary of the lake, the isolated, conical, rocky mount just mentioned, suddenly emerges out of the never-dying green with which every other spot around it is covered, and with its bare, precipitous sides, and grassy, treeless summit, forms an agreeable contrast with all the gay profusion of Nature which surrounds it. Encircled by every thing that is pleasing to the eye, and in the midst of so much wanton exuberance of verdure, such a bare and barren rock as this, with a beetling brow, like the green oases of the desert, is quite refreshing; for the sight, like the other senses, may be so sated with enjoyment, by repeated gloating on the

same changeless and unvaried object, eternally lovely and agreeable, as to become morbidly painful; and life itself, every body knows, without its miseries, by way of a fillip or set off, to teach us how to enjoy its blessings, would become so insipid that it would hardly be safe to trust any man beyond the age of thirty within reach of a fathom of rope, a razor, or a millpond. In this cool and sequestered, and, I am persuaded, healthy region, with a house on the diverging bank, and a skiff on the lake, a man, anxious to be disentangled from the whirling eddies of a noisy, turbulent existence, may meet with uninterrupted peace and repose, amidst the retirement which these shades afford, and the mute tranquillity which prevails around. If unhappy, it would be his own fault; for to search for happiness "with a mind diseased," is about as rational an attempt as for a man with a hump on his back to try to run away from it.

The immense natural basin which contains the lake bears strong evidence of having been the crater of a volcano long ago extinguished. Masses of cinder and lava are found in every direction around it, partially decomposed; and the footpath by which we returned to the village crossed in one or two places, a bed or torrent of lava, that had congealed in eddies, forming concentric layers in its sluggish passage down the mountain. The water of the lake is of a grayish muddy colour, but tastes sweet and good, and has its chief source in the periodical floods which deluge the ground. I had unfortunately no lead or line with me to sound its greatest depth; but, from the muddy colour of the water, and from feeling the bottom with one of the paddles of the canoe, at little more than five feet beneath the surface, in several places within a short distance of its centre, I am persuaded that it is of no great depth at any part. The bottom was soft, and a dark slimy mud adhered to the paddle. We learned from the native who had been so frightened at our first appearance, that there were no fish in it. After I had been a short time on its surface, admiring the surrounding scenery, several canoes put off from

among the bushes, in different parts of its circumference; and on reconnoitering my white jacket a little while, returned precipitately to their lair, being frightened at my gun, which, by the clumsily performed act of hiding it in the bottom of the canoe, that they might approach, was unfortunately discovered to them. Enjoying for some time longer the cool, lambent, vivifying breeze on its smooth bosom, I returned on shore, and presenting the native with a large clasp knife for the use of his canoe, with which he seemed highly gratified, joined my companion, and made preparations for retracing our steps to the village, when another negro, who had just made his appearance, volunteered his services in directing us to a different path, which he gave us to understand was the nearest route. Entering this, and leaving the calm beauties of the mountain lake behind us with some regret, we trudged down hill, over much broken ground, in a winding beaten path, for upwards of two miles, and emerged from among the bushes and trees immediately behind the village. At almost every turning of this passage we found rude wooden crosses erected, and met with three or four small huts, intended for churches, formed of boards, thatched with grass, open at one end, and having nothing within them but a rustic wooden table, at the closed extremity, meant for an altar, on which were placed small crucifixes, and puppet images of saints.—St. Antonia, St. Barbara, &c.

Although the soil on the island is, in general, very sparing, consisting almost wholly of a thin stratum of decomposed lava and rock, and the decayed vegetable matters of former seasons, we found some large plantations on each side of our road, containing cassada, Indian corn, and many of the tropical fruits in great abundance, hedged in, with considerable care, each side of the pathway, with dense rows of the *jatropha curcas*, or physic nut. The villagers did not surround us this time, as they had done on our first visit: the horror of fire arms kept them at a distance. Before embarking in the boat, we discharged our pieces in the air, when all those near us

set up a loud and discordant scream, and fell flat on their faces, as if they had been shot; and then jumped up, and ran as if the enemy of mankind had been close at their heels. Even among these ignorant savages, "pretty considerable notion" seemed to be entertainedof the generosity, as well as of the gullibility, of John Bull. They all endeavoured to impress upon our minds in their few words of broken English, mixed with Portuguese, that they were very "*poor fellows*," and hinted that, as we were *very rich*, we could afford to give them a great deal; and several of them, who seemed to be chiefs, gave us to understand that they wanted to go to England, to see King William, where captain somebody, of a Yankee whaler, who had put the "*notion*" in their heads, told them they would be made much of, and have every thing they could desire. This transatlantic descendant of John Bull did not, of course, tell them that we had poisoned their majesties of Owyhee, by an elaborate farrago of viands, *a-la mode Anglaise*, instead of the simple, primitive, raw fish guts, and greasy porks. that their august stomachs had been accustomed to.

When we got on board in the evening, we found King Tom Standey, in his dressing-gown and green cap, at dinner, with the Commodore, and affording every one the highest amusement, by his familiar ease and assurance, his unscrupulous demands for whatever was within his reach, and by several unkingly and disgusting solecisms in his manners,—such as indecorously blowing his nose in the tail of his coat, during dinner, and wiping in with his sleeve, from the shoulder to the wrist—eructating vociferously—cramming the whole extremity of a fowl into his mouth at a time, and, after crunching the bones between his teeth, ejecting them in his hand, and depositing them on the chair, between his legs! He seemed to be very fond of salt, swallowing, at intervals, whole spoonfuls of it out of the saltcellars. Some gin was put on the table, during dinner, thinking he might perhaps prefer it, for its potency, to wine. He was asked which he would have? — and

very coolly and modestly replied, by a few imperfect Anglo-Portuguese words, and by signs, not to be mistaken, that he, "poo fella, never mind," he would take some of the gin now, and that as his belly was full, he would "bag" the wine and the remaining viands, and "make festa" on shore. This was beyond the utmost idea we had formed of his covetousness, liberal as it had been. But it was impossible to keep our gravity, when, so far from thinking there was any chance of a refusal, he immediately followed this expression of his modest and courteous intentions, by letting the Commodore know, that, as he had no such sideboard furniture, he would also take with him the decenters and glasses! He was shewn, in the cabin, a large print of his present Majesty, which he admired very much and addressed as if it had been our good King in *propria persona*, introducing himself to the print, in the following words:—"Me King Tom Standey, King Anobona. You ver good King, my fader. Me, poo fella, never mind." And observing, with much surprise, his own sable countenance reflected in the glass, as if it were behind the print, he suddenly exclaimed, "Ah, King Tom! you there!—Me see you—me savey you ver well, King Tom Standey, King Anobona." At last he took his departure, pretty well "*stuffed*," as he called it; and, considering the quantity he had drank, but very slightly fuddled. But before taking leave of us, the Commodore besides a musket, gunpowder, and many other articles, gave him a mirror, in which he continued to gaze at his own ebony visage, with unceasing and unsatisfied astonishment, all the way on shore. Like the rest of his subjects, he caught at every thing he could get; but had no notion, or took care at least not to shew any, of the value of the articles he had received or a just sense of the attention he had met with. Some of us observing this grasping, ungrateful, and unceremonious disposition, endeavoured to make him sensible of the value of what he had received, as he was going away, and told him that he ought to "dash" the Commodore with something, in return for so many favours. After some hesitation, he said

he would send some fowls and pigs to our philanthropic chief, as a present. About an hour afterwards, a canoe came alongside, with a single fowl, and a message, saying, that the rest and the pigs had "run in bush," that is, made their escape into the woods, and were not to be found! This was, of course, a mere excuse; but we could not help laughing at its court-like ingenuity.

Anobona might possibly, in the event of a war with France, (which Heaven forfend!) be a desirable place to refit, and obtain refreshments for our vessels cruizing on the Equator, for the purpose of intercepting the homeward and outward bound trade; but could hardly serve any other end. Few vessels, going or returning from India, ever find it necessary to pass near this island. Unless under circumstances of necessity, it would be very inconvenient for them to do so. There is no water to be had at the village near which we anchored; nevertheless, I was told that it might be obtained on the east side of the island, without difficulty: but that here the anchorage was unsafe. Were it in our possession, an aqueduct might be formed, at a very trifling expense, to convey water to the beach, from the lake on the top of the mountain; and refreshments of almost every other description might be reared on the island in great abundance. But, although it is styled the "Cornucopia" of the coast of Africa, by some old writers,* by whom it is also said to be more healthy than Prince's or St. Thomas's Island, its produce could never be sufficiently great to render it of any importance in an agricultural point of view, from its trifling extent, and the scantiness of its soil; nor as a commercial station, for these reasons, as well as its great distance from the coast of Africa.

In concluding these imperfect remarks on Anobona, I shall take the liberty of quoting the account which is given of the island in an English translation of Bosman's (the Dutch factor at Elmina) description of the coast of Guinea, published in

* Vide BOSMAN'S *Description of the Coast of Guinea.*

the year 1705, to shew how little change has taken place in the manners of the inhabitants since that period, and how little improvement may be expected any where under the auspices of the indolent and bigoted Portuguese. He says, "This island is visited by a great number of ships, as well those which have been trading at Guinea, as those bound for East India and Angola. When the East Indiamen fall below the gulf of Guinea, (for they, different from our account, reckon the Gulf of Guinea to take in almost the whole coast,) they put in here; and the ships bound for Angola touch here, it being almost in their way.

"Annaboa is so prodigiously stocked with cattle and fruit, that it far exceeds St. Thome, and Prince's Island in both, though 'tis much smaller, and indeed not above half the circuit of either of them. Like St. Thome, it is almost always covered with a thick mist; but, if we may believe the Portuguese, not so unwholesome. But why it is more healthful I shall not presume to determine, for the air is almost the same, Annaboa being but about one degree and a half more south. The land is here full as high as at St. Thome, and in the highest place of it, according to the report of the Portuguese, is a lake of fresh and very good water, about which the air is as cold as the severest autumns in Holland. But who knows whether this be true?

"The Portuguese have tilled the plains to halfway up the hills; for so far the ground is good. But taking a view of this island from below, it seems very dry and barren; notwithstanding which, it is all over planted with fruit trees,—viz: cocoes, oranges, limons, bakovens, bananas, palm trees, and several others, whose fruits are all plentiful and cheap. One hundred cocoa nuts are sold for a rixdollar; a thousand oranges or limons at the same rate; and the other fruits in proportion. Hogs, sheep, goats, chickens, &c. are to be bought for almost nothing, considering that we have them for all manner of old trash clothes of linen and woollen. In short, here is

the true Amalthæa, or Cornucopia, of which the ancients have said so many fine things.

"The inhabitants of this island are black, and but a sort of half Christians, though they bear the name of Christians, or if they can but read a Pater Noster and Ave Maria, confess to the priest, and bring some offerings with them, they pass for good Christians.

"The white Portuguese of this island esteem them slaves, by reason that they are the descendants of those slaves which they set on this island. They are all of them, without any exception, thieves or rogues, that will injure or defraud no man more than they can. The women are all common public whores, which allure and mislead the sailors, and, except a very few, are monstrous ugly and illfavoured.

"The government of these people is trusted in the hands of a white Portuguese, who is honoured with the illustrious name of Gouvernador. He who was honoured with this high post in my time was such a great Don, that if I had been charitable enough to have bestowed the alms of a crown on him, he would have made no difficulty of receiving it, nor thought it an affront to his honourable charge, or the grandeur of his nation.

"His subjects also stood in such awe of him that, if I had but desired them, they would certainly have broken his head, and delivered the island into our possession. For this Don being appointed by a Portuguese gentleman, to whom this island belongs, as rent gatherer in his name, to collect a third of all the inhabitants' cattle, fruit, and income, in order to secure somewhat for himself, he very fairly fleeces the inhabitants of a complete half, which renders him so hated by his black subjects that they would very willingly be released from their yoke, and deliver the island to another nation.

"But it would not indeed be serviceable to any nation, without all its black subjects were transported thence: for whilst they

stay there, on account of the least difference with the possessors they would fly to the hilly part of the island, which is sufficiently inaccessible to the Europeans, and from thence so gall them that they would be obliged to abandon it; as it happened to us when we formerly were in possession of it; for we left it on no other account.

"Besides the Gouvernador, I found here also two white priests, who were endowed with no other qualities than the profound ignorance and stupidity of the meanest of their neighbours, except only, (which is indeed something uncommon,) that they could drink as much brandy as I could wine, or other liquor. Their wisdom was lodged in their capuchin's cap. I cannot tell whether they could read or write, since I did not see one book they had, nor would they produce one, though I asked the favour, perhaps that it might not be defiled with my heretical fingers.

"They invited us to come and see their churches, which we did, and found them very handsome, and large enough for four times the number of inhabitants on the island. Before we entered the churches we were all over besprinkled with holy water, from which I conclude that it is not very dear here.

"They desired a bottle of wine of me to celebrate their mass with, which I gave them, and they thereupon promised me (though unasked) that they would say a mass for my happy voyage, after which I took leave of them."

He follows this amusing account with an anecdote of what he appears to consider a very laudable trick played on a pirate at that island, by the master of an English merchant vessel.

"We saw here some small pieces of cannon, and asking where they got them, we were informed that they belonged to a small French pirate, which stranded there about ten

days before; the captain of which, with two of his men, was then upon the island.

"These pirates had robbed the Gold Coast of some gold, slaves, and elephants' teeth. But two days before our arrival there, the Sloter Galley, an English ship, commanded by Thomas Kent, had set sail from hence, having made an agreement with the pirates, in consideration of a part of their prey to be given to the captain, to carry them and all their booty to the French islands. The pirates, depending on this contract, had brought all their goods on board. Captain Kent, and all the men, except the captain and two more, followed, who designed to have gone on board the last day of the Galley's stay here; but, as they were coming, were welcomed with a few musket-shots, and charged, if they valued their lives, to return back, which they were obliged to do; and had the satisfaction of seeing Captain Kent haul up his anchors, and set sail, with all their goods."

CHAPTER IV.

Bidding adieu to Anobona, we set sail, late in the evening of the 30th, and steered towards the island of St. Thomas, between which and the Isle de Rolle (an island little more than a mile in length, situated at the southern extremity of the former) we anchored, in the afternoon of the succeeding day. Although a single canoe, containing two miserable looking blacks, who must have risked their lives for the purpose, came off to us from Rolle Island, bringing some tropical fruits, dried fish, and sponges, for sale, there was such a tremendous surf, throughout the whole line of coast of both islands, that none of our boats could land. Close to our anchorage, the sea was thundering and breaking violently among the clefts and chasms of the rocky shore, from which the spray issued in thick white jetting columns, like the smoke of artillery, curling in the air, and dissipating in thin vapour. Our anchorage was directly under the equator. The wind was southerly, and the thermometer only seventy-nine degrees. There were three or four huts near us, on the principal island, and abundance of cocoa nut trees in their vicinity; but we could perceive no inhabitants.

The outline of St. Thomas' Island is very irregular and broken, and resembles, in its impenetrable forest-covered surface, the Island of Fernando Po; and, in its romantic appearance, its numerous fantastic-shaped hills, and inaccessible peaks, the Island of Prince, but on a far larger and more stupendous scale. We could, however, only look at it at a distance; and finding our anchorage, as the swell increased, becoming hour-

ly more unsafe, we left it next day, and reached West Bay, Prince's Island, on the 2d of June, the day following. After we had been here two or three days, Senora Ferrara, hearing of our arrival, came round from her estate in Church Bay, and took up her abode in her unfinished residence here, bringing with her a whole host of male and female slaves. His Majesty's ship Atholl arriving soon after us, Madame's naval levees were, at this time, unusually crowded, and her hospitality taxed, far beyound all that could be endured in the cramped selfishness of a drizzly, callous, northern atmosphere ; but the endeavours of the good "*Queen*," to please, and to afford us amusement, seemed only to increase with the number of her visitors. Her slaves danced and sang to us, and performed in the evenings, under her own guidance and direction, some artless and imperfect operas, sacred and heroic, for our entertainment,—all of which she has taught them herself. Her house was at all times open to us; and her chief gratification seemed to consist in seeing it well filled, and in enjoying, with *due* feminine consistency, the universal deference paid to her.—Banished as we are from the civilized world, the kindness of this good lady, and the inelegant games and rustic entertainments performed by her half savage attendants, afford us no small degree of gratification, by breaking in upon the monotony of our hazardous existence, and chasing away the dull thoughts of many an unoccupied and brooding hour. But the best of friends must part—the most celestial enjoyment and the deepest grief must equally have an end : and, so, after a fortnight's stay, for the purpose of refreshment, and obtaining a supply of water and firewood, we bade adieu to Madame, and her cortege, on the 15th, and stood over towards the river Bonny, off the entrance to which we anchored on the 20th, about sixteen miles from the shore, in execution of our orders to suppress the slave trade,—a matter, from the many holes out of which vessels engaged in it may escape, owing to the bad faith and apathy of foreign governments, and the defects of our treaties with them, quite as agreeable, and as likely to be accomplish-

ed, as the punishment inflicted upon the fifty daughters of Danaus.

The land in the vicinity of this river, which, with the New Calabar, disgorges its contents by a common outlet, into the sea, is so very low, that it is to be seen only from the mast head. Here we have, daily at present, incessant torrents of rain, and fine, clear moonlight nights. About dawn, the clouds gradually begin to form, and, with the advance of day, collect in dense masses, heavily charged with electricity, the salient flickering streams of which scintillate, with brilliant vivacity, in every direction around us,—while the thunder reverberates through the dense canopy over our heads with the most incessant and deafening clamour; and the product of this vehement natural conflict bursting the floodgates of heaven, rushes down upon us in a vast, continuous, and almost overwhelming torrent, until towards evening, when the clouds again gradually disperse, and, as the moon rises, disappear entirely, leaving a still, beautiful, and clear sky, save where, at intervals, a glimmer of lightning, issuing from some far distant cloud, illuminates the horizon over the broad continent of Africa. It is only in the vicinity of the land that these heavy rains occur. We have found that their violence and frequency diminish as the distance off shore increases, and *vice versa*; and that, at one hundred and fifty miles, or even somewhat less, from the coast, there is only an occasional shower met with.

It was mentioned by the Landers, on their recent arrival at Fernando Po, after emerging from the interior of Africa, *via* the river Nun, and settling the long-disputed termination of the Niger, that they were of opinion the Nun communicated with the New Calabar river, and consequently with the Bonny, by means of a cross branch sufficiently large for canoe navigation. Hearing this statement repeated, I have taken some pains to make inquiries concerning so interesting a fact, and have ascertained—certainly not by personal observation, but upon what I conceive to be undeniable evidence—that all the

streams which fall into the sea, from the Rio de Formoso to the Old Calabar inclusive, are united together by cross branches, and intermediate streams, at no great distance from the sea; consequently, they may all, in a certain measure, be said to be mouths of the Niger. The sources from whence I have derived the information which led to this conclusion were the following: Masters of merchant ships, who have frequently visited the river, off the mouth of which we are at present anchored; naval officers who have been there, and to some of the other rivers included, in the performance of their duty; and the most intelligent of the native Africans. From the former I learn, that canoes frequently arrive at the river Bonny from Duke Ephraim, a chief of the Old Calabar, by some inland stream, without ever seeing the ocean—that the arrival of canoes at the same place, and by a similar means, from the river Nun, and other rivers between the Bonny and Cape Formosa, is also of frequent occurrence—and the native blacks assured me, that there is a great inland trade in slaves, ivory, palm oil, and British manufactures, carried on through the medium of these streams uniting the principal rivers. Corroborative of these statements is the extreme flatness of the country between Cape Formosa and the Old Calabar river, and the numerous streams which may be seen to intersect it in all directions, even by ships standing close to the shore.

Before anchoring where we are at present, we spoke the Cherokee of Liverpool, (late brig of war of that name,) from the New Calabar river, laden with palm oil, the master of which informed us, that there were several French and Spanish vessels lying in that, and the river Bonny, in readiness to embark slaves; and that a Spanish schooner with four hundred on board, had sailed three days before. He also acquainted us with the total destruction, about a week ago, of the Dee of Liverpool, by fire, in one of these rivers, several of whose crew the Cherokee had then on board. During the four months that this vessel has been lying in the river Calabar, nine of her crew have died of fever. As our tender, the

Black Joke, which was ordered to cruize off these rivers, was nowhere to be seen, we concluded that she had captured the above mentioned schooner, and had gone to Fernando Po for the purpose of landing her prisoners; but after getting under weigh again, on the 23d, we fell in with her, and found that she had been under the necessity of proceeding to Prince's Island for water, and that consequently the Spaniard had unfortunately effected his escape, with his victims, during her absence. The commander of the tender gave us a melancholy account of the fate of those nine persons—part of the crew of her late capture, the Marinerito—who, I stated above, had left Anobona in three canoes, to endeavour to reach the Island of St. Thomas. One of these canoes the tender picked up at sea, off the river Bonny, with three persons on board, in as dreadful state of wretchedness, having seen no land since they left Anobona, and left without food or water, except what of the latter they caught in their mouths when it rained, for ten days; the slender bark which contained the whole of their little stock having swamped. Two of these men are still on board of the tender, with little hope of recovery—the other was landed at Prince's Island. They know nothing of their companions in the other two canoes, farther than that they conjecture they were destroyed by a heavy tornado, which came upon them when they had been long without food, their strength exhausted, and in despair of ever again setting their eyes on any wished for object, and from the effects of which they themselves most miraculously escaped. One would willingly discover a fearful retribution in this.

We left the Black Joke on her station, and stood towards Fernando Po, where we anchored on the 24th, and heard of the arrival of the Marinerito at Sierre Leone, after a passage of twenty-five days, during which twenty-five of the slaves died! From seventy to eighty of those landed in a weak state at Fernando Po, were, on being somewhat recruited, embarked on board of his Majesty's brig Plumper, and sent to Sierre Leone. The voyage in this vessel occupied the

space of a month, and twenty more of the slaves fell victims to a horrible destiny before they reached the colony! Some of them, in their mental agony and bodily distress, jumped overboard and were drowned. What had they to live for? They were bereaved of home, and every blessing for ever. Well might the wretched African, writhing under his accumulated miseries, and ready to sever the thread of an existence which had afforded to him such draughts of unmingled bitterness,—withered in heart, captive, homeless, friendless, and desolate—well might he deplore the fate of his unhappy country; and, thinking of all that he had loved and left there, exclaim, in the beautiful language of Moore—

> Oh! could'st thou but know
> With what a deep devotedness of wo
> I wept thy absence o'er and o'er again,
> Thinking of thee, still thee, till thought grew pain,
> And memory, like a drop that night and day
> Falls cold and ceaseless, wore my heart away!

Including the deaths among those who remained at Fernando Po, eighty-four of these unhappy beings have perished since the period of capture! There is something so truly distressing and deplorable in this, that it calls loudly for an immediate, a vigorous, and a permanent remedy. Such a remedy has been suggested in the foregoing pages. Government can alone obtain and apply it; and for the sake of suffering humanity, the greatest sacrifices ought to be made, and the strongest measures had recourse to, to induce those Catholic powers, whose interest alone is concerned, and who seem to be insensible to the calls of humanity, to grant the necessary concessions for the purpose of abolishing this villainous trade. Some powerful efforts ought at once to be used, to lead them to a just sense of those flagitious cruelties perpetrated by their subjects, which so deeply stain their honour, and bring infamy upon the flag of the nation to which they belong. Either these things must be done, and done effectually, or the trade ought to be allowed to go on unobstructed: for, by the present inefficient laws enacted against it, we ourselves

only add to the inhumanity with which it is carried on, by the measures which we adopt, as I have explained above, and as the present instance sufficiently demonstrates.

During our absence, the agent victualler has arrived here, in the Stentor transport, from Sierre Leone, bringing with him the whole of the naval stores, so that, in future, Fernando Po will be the naval depot on the coast, where ships of war may refit, and obtain supplies. This arrangement has been projected for some time, but whether it be judicious or not, remains to be proved. It is, however, already sufficiently established, that the damp nature of the atmosphere produces a rapid decay of almost every article sent here from England—canvass, spars, and ropes are found rotten—sugar in a state of deliquescence, resembling treacle—and bread so full of maggots and weevils that it is scarcely eatable, and would be condemned as unfit for use, were it any where else than at Fernando Po, where there is no choice left, and little or nothing in lieu of it to be had. After a fortnight's stay, during which we had heavy showers daily, and the themometer ranging from seventy-seven to eighty-one degrees, we took our departure for the Island of Ascension, touching again at Prince's Island, for wood and water, in our passage.

After some days lost in search of the mysterious Island of St Matthew,* which we did *not* discover, for the very best of reasons, that there is no such place in existence, we arrived, on the 29th July, at the Island of Ascension, a rugged, cinerulent congeries of volcanic tumuli, occupied by about four hundred individuals, consisting of a garrison of royal marines, and a few liberated Africans, with their wives

* Anobona has been most probably mistaken for an unknown island, and called St. Matthew's by some one who was most mightily out in his longitude, (an occurrence formerly very common on this coast,) as they are both laid down on charts in the same latitude, and as the description given of the imaginary island answers that of the former, in having a lake on the top, from which ships used to derive a supply of water, when much in want of it, by "*parbuckling*" their casks down the side of the mountain.

and families, under the direction of Captain Bate, R. M, The climate here is exceedingly grateful to our feelings, after the damp and drizzley atmosphere of the pestilent coast we have just left. From the very small quantity of rain that falls on the lower parts of this island, but little decomposition of its superficies has taken place in this situation; consequently there is here scarcely any vegetation, and the air is uncommonly pure and dry. The temperature at present is varying from seventy-two to eighty degrees during the day. The upper half of what is called the green mountain, which is about seven miles from the anchorage, is decomposing rapidly. The elevation of this spot is two thousand eight hundred and eighteen feet. It is almost constantly enveloped in mist, but is, notwithstanding, uncommonly healthy—the thermometer averaging ten or twelve degrees below its usual range at the garrison and anchorage. The soil at this spot is a loose black earth, very productive, and already extensively cultivated.—Fields of several acres of the common and sweet potato, turnips, and other esculent plants, adorn the sloping sides of the mountain; and the mountain house, besides its pleasure ground of English flowers and shrubs, has its kitchen garden, which produces almost every vegetable in great perfection and abundance. The transition from the arid, barren, treeless, low grounds, to this fertile spot, is so sudden and unexpected, that one is struck with no inconsiderable degree of surprise and pleasure on emerging from a scene of the most awful desolation, and almost the next step entering one where there is every thing rural and agreeable. Until lately, the greatest want in the island has been a determinate supply of water. For this necessary article it placed its sole dependence upon the light and uncertain showers, and the scanty drips and percolation from certain parts of the rocks high up the mountain. Recently, however, a shaft has been sunk in a ravine on the southern aspect of the mountain, which, we are told, is to afford from two to three tons daily. Tanks have been built on the side of the mountain, and at the garrison, to contain

this, and what may otherwise be collected; and the arduous duty of laying the six miles of iron pipes, which are to convey the water to the garrison tanks, will, it is supposed, be completed by Christmas. Near the garrison a range of building has been recently erected, which is intended for the accommodation of sick officers belonging to the African squadron, and the foundation of an hospital for the seamen has just been laid; and it is intended to continue the squadron on the coast; which I conceive to be, under present circumstances, not only in a great measure useless, but very often injurious to the object for which it is sent there—to the cause of humanity —there is no place on the station better adapted for the sick and convalescents to be brought to for recovery than this, although undoubtedly a higher part of the island would have been a far better situation for the hospital.

Wild Goats and Guinea fowl are very numerous on the island, particularly the latter, but they are very shy and shot with difficulty. The gannets, of which there are several varieties, congregate in vast numbers on particular points of the island, which have obtained, in consequence, the appellation of "Fairs." There they sit, looking stupidly at intruders, with the greatest *sang froid* imaginable, and are taken hold of with the greatest ease. But they sometimes take it into their heads to defend themselves, and in that case are apt to inflict a troublesome lacerated wound or two with the serrated edge of their long and powerful beaks. Not more than six or eight kinds of birds ever visit the island, consisting of the sea-swallow, gannet, petrel, frigate pelican, or man-of-war bird, tropic bird, and a few others of the palmipedeous tribe.

The *wide awakes*, as they are called by the seamen from their peculiar cry, or sea-swallow, arrive in vast numbers about the month of September or October, and take up the same position of fair annually, where their eggs and young are taken in vast numbers by the people on the island, who consider them good food, particularly the former, many thousands

of which are brought in weekly during the breeding season These birds take no trouble to build a nest, but lay their eggs upon the loose ashes and sand in vast numbers, and so close together that it puzzles one to conceive how it is possible that each can know his own. That these may be obtained fresh, the people belonging to the island sometimes adopt the following method:—They clear a spot of the broken egg shells. filth, and rubbish, which covers the surface of the ground in the fair where they congregate, and, after having done so, set themselves down at a little distance to watch the event. The cleared portion of the fair is very soon covered with birds, which deposit their eggs almost immediately, and are succeeded by others which do the same, so that ten or twelve dozen eggs, assuredly fresh, are often taken from the spot that has been cleared, in the course of a few hours. These are about the size of a pullet's egg, and are covered with large dark brown spots.

Land crabs and rats are very numerous, and destructive to the young vegetation about the mountain, and indeed to every thing edible. Black crickets are in myriads in every part of the island, and form the chief food of the Guinea fowl. Wild cats are pretty numerous, and are hunted and destroyed with dogs kept on the island for that purpose. The cattle, of which there are a considerable number, are brought from the Cape of Good Hope; and of the vegetable productions there is a greater variety than might be conceived, but very few of them are indigenous. In the low grounds, a few thistles, euphorbium, and purslain, are all that indicate the existence of vegetation. Proceeding higher up, we have some signs of grass, and we have also the beautiful yellowish-red flower of the ipecacuanha, the wild St. Helena, or Cape gooseberry, and a few stunted plants of the common ricinus; and still higher up, besides several tropical fruits, shrubs, and flowers, there are many of the horticultural plants, and some of the fruits, of England. Fish is in great abundance and variety around the island.

The present is not the turtle season, but those of last year are kept by the garrison in two large ponds, from whence they are removed with ease when wanted. December and January are the principal months during which the females come on shore to deposit their eggs on the sandy beach. They are watched for during the night, when they land for this purpose, and are seized in their retreat, and turned on their backs, where they lie helpless until it is found convenient to remove them to one of the ponds. As this is the only method of taking these unwieldly animals, it seldom happens that a male turtle is captured. The fortifications are not yet completed, nor are they likely to be so, as the few marines on the island have more work in contemplation for them than they will be able to accomplish for a very long period; and for the performance of which, by the by, they have nothing more than their poor pay as marines. Mechanics who have enlisted into the marine corps are chosen from the different divisions in England and sent out here, where they are kept at such laborious work from morning to night as our working classes in England have no idea of, and for which they receive nothing in addition to their mere daily pay, which amounts to somewhere about tenpence; and at this reasonable rate Government has its public buildings erected, and all its other public work done, and done exceedingly well, at the Island of Ascension.

The climate here is remarkably healthy, and, indeed, the stout, hale, ruddy appearance of the inhabitants, sufficiently demonstrate that it is so, without going any farther for proofs. Dysentery may be said to be the most prevalent disease; but even this cannot properly be said to be prevalent, but only as compared with others, as it occurs but seldom, and very rarely proves fatal. The south-east trade wind, no doubt, contributes to the salubrity of the island, by the brisk and unintermitting breeze which is thus wafted over its surface, and which is so charged with saline matters from the ocean, over which it

sweeps, that it often leaves an incrustation of salt on the lava-coloured surface in its passage.

As a depot for stores, owing to its extreme dryness, Ascension is incomparable. We have seen, that at Fernando Po, the bread is in a short time riddled with weevils, and full of maggots, and that every thing else rots, from the humidity of the atmosphere, while every article of stores is as sound, after it has been here some years, and when first brought out. For this reason, and as the length of passage from any of those places on the coast, where our ships are in the habit of cruizing for slave vessels, seldom exceeds ten days, there can be no comparison between this place and Fernando Po, as a depot for stores, where the African squadron may refit, particularly as the anchorage is excellent, and the wind always blows off shore. As a Government garden the island is highly useful, and its salubrity points it out as a desirable place for the African squadron to refresh and take in a new stock of health, and to send their sick for recovery. For these purposes, and for the supplies which it occasionally affords to distressed merchant vessels—many of which, bound to and from India, now touch here, to complete their stock of water and purchase a few turtle, in preference to St Helena—it is highly valuable, and may be still more so in the event of war; but its arable surface is as trifling, and its distance from any continent is so great, as to preclude the idea of its ever being more extensively important, excepting that, while our flag flies over it, it is no thorn in our side, as it might be in the possession of another.

The supply of water is still so small and uncertain, even with the recent addition by the shaft mentioned above, that, were there a succession of demands of any magnitude for this necessary article, the island could not afford it without endangering the quantity required for the support of its own inhabitants. From what I can learn, however, it is quite probable that this may be in a great measure remedied, by sink-

ing a few more shafts, to a great depth, at a little distance from the sea shore. This has been attempted, but hitherto, I believe, very imperfectly.

29th August. The Conflict gun-brig arrived here to-day, from Freetown, Sierra Leone, with her officers and crew in a very sickly state. She has been lying at the colony for some months, and latterly that scourge of the coast, the yellow remittent fever, had made its appearance on board in an epidemical form, attacking thirty-three of her small crew, eight of whom had already paid the debt of Nature.

1st September. The progress of the fever, on board of the Conflict, was stopped on approaching the Equator; and since her arrival here, it is astonishing with what rapidity those still labouring under the disease have recovered, affording a strong confirmation of what has been stated regarding the eligibility of this spot for the reception and restoration of the sick and convalescents belonging to the squadron.

We sailed again on the 9th September, and reached Prince's Island on the 21st. I cannot leave Ascension without expressing how much we have all been gratified, and improved in health by our visit. Nothing could possibly exceed the attention we have met with from every one; and it is not to be wondered at, if, in the midst of so much kindness, we occasionally forget the abhorred coast, and the vapid and enervating climate of Fernando Po, to which we knew we must return. A few days after we reached Prince's Island, his Majesty's ship Favourite arrived from Loando, where she had been despatched to look after some slave vessels, of which information had been received, and the intelligence she brings is of a very mortifying description, and proves, in the most incontestible manner, the absolute folly of attempting to suppress the traffic under the existing treaties and laws relative to it. She found lying at Loando ten or twelve vessels of different descriptions, ready to take slaves on board, the greater part of whom were Portuguese; and, consequently,

being to the southward of the Equator, the commander of the Favourite, (such is the previso in our treaty with Portugal,) dared not interfere with them, and even had each of them been laden with their wretched victims, he must have been compelled to suffer them to proceed in their *humane* employment unmolested! Since the convention with Brazil came into operation, which made the slave trade piracy, there is not a single flag of that nation to be found on the coast: but, what is the result? The Brazil trade is now carried on with the most perfect impunity under the flag of Portugal; and all that this convention has effected, concerning which there was so much exultation among unthinking philanthropists, is a change in the colour of a piece of bunting, or a shift from a worthless flag to one, if possible, still more degraded.

On the 3d of October, we again anchored at Fernando Po, where we found that, during our absence, an officer of the Royal Marines had arrived from England to superintend the affairs of the settlement, and had brought with him a number of marines and mechanics, for the service of the infant colony. The fatality of this wretched place has been strikingly exemplified in numerous instances since we left it. Six of those unfortunate mechanics and marines just arrived are already dead, and a great part of the remainder have been in the hospital. A naval lieutenant, Mr. Sullivan, who came out to join his Majesty's brig Plumper, by the same conveyance with these men, is also already dead. The agent victualler and one of his clerks have been at the brink of the grave, and have gone home to preserve their lives. The Favourite sloop of war, which we left here, had nine persons seized with fever; the Fair Rosamond, tender to this ship, out of her small compliment of forty men, ten cases of fever, and two deaths; and the master of the Stentor transport, and one of the boys of the same vessel, died of fever soon after we left the island, while nearly all the crew were attacked with the same disease. In fact, there is among our ships of war, and among all visitors to this place, but one opinion respecting the climate of Cla-

rence Town, Fernando Po; and none but those whose interest is concerned, and who hold lucrative situations in the settlement—and who would, of course, lose them were the place given up in consequence of the truth being made known, and the fatality of its climate painted in its true colours—venture to utter a syllable in favour of it. But by these persons, the cause of disease and death is attributed to any thing rather than what it truly and evidently is,—the pestilential nature of the atmosphere.

It is really difficult either to speak or write with patience of statements so inconsistent with facts, while at every step we meet with some unhappy labourer, whose sallow, wretched, death-like aspect, and fleshless limbs, evince too truly how little faith can be placed in bare assertions, and indicate too strongly that fever hath "marked *the climate* for its own." These very persons tell us, at the same time, that "it is a *healthy thing* to have the ague"—"that one is always safe when he has an ague:" meaning by this to say that they are less susceptible of the fatal remittent fever while under the influence of this minor pest. Let any one conceive to himself what sort of an existence that must be, when a man is safe only while he is labouring under an ague! a disease that disorders his nervous system, and, if it continues long, produces visceral disease, and ruins his constitution forever. This is an admission of those very individuals who praise the settlement for its salubrity, as compared with other parts of the coast of Africa; and from this I leave every one to form his own opinion of the nature of the climate, and of the very logical deductions of these honest and disinterested gentlemen, whose statements might make an impression favourable to the settlement, where facts should be known simply as they stand. What I have already related, sufficiently demonstrate that Clarence Settlement is most unhealthy. The only question is, Whether it be more so than any other of our settlements on the western coast of Africa? It is, to say the least of it, equally as fatal as Sierra Leone, and that is saying a

great deal, by the proofs, and for the reasons, which have just been given, as well as those mentioned in a former page; and, in my opinion, it is much more so: for, as we have found on an average that two or three of the forty or fifty whites in the settlement die weekly, and that the whole of the remainder, with few exceptions, either are or have been ill—how frightful would such a general sickness, and average mortality, be considered among three or four thousand! Be it remembered, too, that this mortality was in the common course of things, and not caused by an epidemic. I questioned whether Sierra Leone, bad as it is, including epidemics, has ever been nearly so fatal. But besides these proofs in favour of the climate of Sierra Leone, as contrasted with that of Fernando Po, another assertion of the good people here speaks more decisively to the point at issue, and against themselves, than all other proofs that can be adduced. They tell us that a debauch at Fernando Po is sure to terminate in a fever, and in all probability death—that it is impossible to tamper with the constitution there, without running the greatest risk; and instance all the deaths among the working classes, which they say—and say very unjustly—arise entirely from drunkenness, and that they are, therefore, from sad experience, guarded in their mode of life. No doubt, drunkenness strongly predisposes to fever and other diseases; but are the colonists at Sierra Leone cautious how they indulge in the pleasures of the table? Do they dread the consequence of frequent debauches? Or do they tell us that drunkenness is at all times, or even commonly, the cause of death among the labouring residents, or others, in the colony? No! but instead of this, it is notorious, that they indulge to the greatest excess—that they have no solicitous anxieties about the result of their irregularities—and that it is by no means common or necessary that even repeated intoxication is followed with fatal consequences, as is the case at Fernando Po, according to the statements of the residents there. If, therefore, at one place drunkenness is sure to produce disease, and at the other no such termination is ever looked for, although it must, as it does every where

else, occasionally occur, what is the conclusion? why, that the new settlement at Fernando Po has a climate more destructive to human life, and less tolerant of the liberties usually taken with health by civilized people, than that of Sierra Leone. Every one must know that labouring men, from the very nature of their work, are much more susceptible of disease, particularly in these burning latitudes, than those who have no fatiguing duties to perform, and who have both the means and the opportunity of taking care of themselves, and the "appliances" for preserving their health. This has been very remarkably the case at Fernando Po; for while the former have been dying daily, the latter have only suffered from ague, and very few of them have lost their lives, and have been obliged to return to England in a state of mental, as well as bodily, imbecility. It is, no doubt, in a great measure owing to this comparative immunity that the ill-advised, self-interested supporters of its salubrity are induced to assert, so unfeelingly and unjustly, that the cause of so many deaths among these poor people is drunkenness; not taking into consideration their own frequent attacks of ague, and the far greater liability of working persons to disease. At present, the hospital is full of whites; but concealment and misrepresentation being the order of the day here, from what motive it is difficult to conceive, there is no means I regret to say of getting at the actual mortality. But, in spite of every attempt to cloak the melancholy occurrences which take place, they are too frequent, too appalling, and too well known to be concealed. Despair has seized the mechanics recently arrived. Some of them have written to the Commodore, giving an account of the many deaths among their companions, and the sickness and distress among the remainder, and begging to be sent home; as, according to their original agreement, they were to be permitted to go home, should the climate prove injurious to their health. Besides the mortality among the white, the number of deaths among the liberated Africans and Kroumen, connected with the settlement, is also very great: and no note is taken of the destruction to life on board merchant ves-

vessels touching here, and of the great number of the crews sent to the hospital, never to return. There is such a horror of this hospital, as it is called, among all the poor people in the settlement, whites as well as blacks, that they give themselves up for lost when it is found necessary to send them there so few come out of it alive.

Unfortunately for our African colonies, individuals have occasionally got a footing in them, who have been scouted from society, and who, like drowning men, grasp at whatever is within their reach, to save them from perdition. But Africa has gained nothing, by having thus become the forlorn hope of the disgraced. If this settlement is ever to improve, these are not the characters to bring, or to suffer to remain, here, far less to place in official situations. It is insulting the feelings of respectable men in it, as well as of every naval officer employed on the station, who may often be obliged, from necessity, to come in contact with characters of this description, in the performance of their duty; and who, with that proper sense of respect for himself which every man ought to possess, and that abhorrence of dishonesty which every upright mind feels, would avoid any such communication, as injurious to his honour, and as compromising whatever is estimable in his character as a man.

Our tender, the Black Joke, Lieutenant William Ramsey, was lying here, waiting to acquaint us with some captures which she and the Fair Rosamond, Lieutenant H. V. Huntly, had made, since we last saw them. The latter, while cruizing in the Bight of Benin, fell in with and captured, on the 20th of July, the Spanish schooner, Potosi, of ninety-eight tons, twenty-six men, and one hundred and ninety-one slaves on board, bound from Lagos to Havanna; and, on the 10th September, the two tenders, in company, chased into the river Bonny, and captured, the Spanish brigs, Rapido and Regulo, — the former of one hundred and seventy-five tons, eight large guns, fifty-six men, and two hundred and four slaves; the latter, one hundred and forty-seven tons, (both

Spanish admeasurement,) five large guns, fifty men, and two slaves: both bound to Cuba. Connected with the capture of these vessels, a circumstance of the most horrid and revolting nature occurred, the relation of which will afford an additional instance of the cruelty and apathy of those who carry on the slave trade, — of the imperfection of the laws enacted for its suppression, as well as of the additional inhumanity entailed upon it by ourselves, as a consequence of the very imperfection of these laws. Both vessels were discovered at the entrance of the Bonny, having just sailed from thence; and, when chased by the tenders, put back, made all sail up the river, and ran on shore. During the chase, they were seen from our vessels to throw the slaves overboard, by twos, shackelled together by the ancles, and left in this manner to sink or swim, as they best could! Men, women, and young children, were seen, in great numbers, struggling in the water, by every one on board of the two tenders; and, dreadful to relate, upwards of a hundred and fifty of these wretched creatures perished in this way, without there being a hand to help them, — for they had all disappeared before the tenders reached the spot, excepting two, who were fortunately saved by our boats from the element with which they were struggling. Several managed, with difficulty, as may be supposed, to swim on shore, and many were throw into large canoes, and in that manner landed, and escaped death; but the multitude of dead bodies cast upon the beach, during the succeeding fortnight, painfully demonstrated, that the account given to us, by the natives on the banks of the Bonny, of the extent of the massacre, had been far from exaggerated. The individuals whose lives had been saved by the boats were two fine intelligent young men, rivited together by the ancles, in the manner described. Both of them when recovered pointed to the Rapido, as the vessel from which they were thrown into the water. On boarding this vessel, no slave was found; but her remorseless crew having been seen from both tenders busily engaged in their work of destruction, and as the two poor blacks, who endeavoured to express gratitude for their

rescue by every means in their power, asserted, with horror and alarm depicted in every feature, that this was the vessel from which they were thrown, she was taken possession of. On board the Regulo only two hundred and four slaves were found remaining, of about four hundred and fifty. All of those found on board of her were branded with the letter T on the right shoulder. Had the commander of the Black Joke, (which had been cruizing off the river Bonny for a long period,) who knew that those vessels were lying there, ready to take slaves on board, been permitted to use every means in his power to suppress the slave trade, he could and would have gone up the river with his vessel, and destroyed them with greatest ease; and thereby prevented the merciless cruelty which subsequently took place. But no! He dared not; because he was liable in heavy penalties, had he even *detained* a Spaniard, without having slaves *actually on board*. These inhuman scoundrels are fully aware of this; and it was this very legal impediment in the capture of Spanish vessels which induced them to throw their miserable captives into the river; so that, no slave being found when boarded by the tenders, they and their vessels might be suffered to escape. But they could not effect their nefarious design completely, for our tenders were close at their heels, and they were detected in their crime, and consequently detained. As, however, there were no slaves *actually found on board* of the Rapido, and as the members of the Court of Mixed Commission at Sierra Leone usually adhere to the *letter* instead of the *spirit* of the law, and the treaties having for their object the surpression of the slave trade — although the fact of her having slaves, *bona fide*, on board, and having thrown them out in the murderous manner desbribed, was witnessed by some hundreds of persons — it is questioned by many here, on consideration of the circumstances attending the trial of cases somewhat similar, whether this court, from whose verdict there is no appeal, will condemn her or not.* It is quite

* She was condemned on the evidence of the two slaves.

certain, whether this may be the case or not, that there will be no punishment inflicted upon the perpetrators of so great a crime.

Thus, as I have already said, the half measures we are obliged to adopt for the suppression of this merciless traffic, adds incalculably to its inhumanity. Here we see, that in a futile attempt to save their vessels from capture, these remorseless speculators in blood sacrificed more than a hundred and fifty lives. Had we let them alone, the dreadful event would not have taken place. One of two things only could have prevented it, namely, the destruction or capture of their vessels before the slaves were taken on board, (which is undoubtedly the most effectual plan,) or allowing them to depart unmolested, after they were embarked; for humanity is so little known among the crews of their vessels, that even at sea, where there was not the most distant chance of escape to land by swimming, as in the present instance, they have been known, when chased by ships of war, to sacrifice their captives in a similar manner. It is in vain to look for any of the better feelings among these unprincipled men, who are the very dregs and offscourings of society,—pirates, outlaws, and wretches who have been guilty of the most heinous offences, and are therefore perfect adepts in every species of villainy, and would shrink from no crime, of whatever magnitude, where their interest was concerned. Both vessels being aground when taken possession of, it became a duty of the most laborious nature to get them afloat, and the zeal of Lieutenants Huntly and Ramsay, together with that of the officers and the crews of both tenders for this purpose, were at length successful, after several days of the most arduous exertion.

9th November. Since our arrival at the settlement, we have been employed repairing the Black Joke, for which purpose she has been hauled up on a rude kind of slip, or dock, where our carpenters, and several of those belonging to the island, have been daily at work upon her. Two days ago one

of these island carpenters died of fever, and all the others have been more or less ill. Of the eight persons employed about this vessel, belonging to our ship, five have been seized with fever, and all the others are complaining, and what is more, they are all very sober characters. In consequence of sickness making its appearance also on board of the ship, in the shape of fever, cholera, and numerous obstinate, indolent, and irritable ulcers, arising from the slightest scratch, we took our departure this evening from the destructive climate of Clarence establishment, leaving the Atholl, which arrived here yesterday, to look after the repairs of the tender until our return. We stood towards West Bay, Prince's Island, where we anchored on the 15th, got refreshments for the crew, fruit and vegetables—articles not to be had at Fernando Po—took on board a supply of good water, and sailed again on the 17th, for the settlement, where we anchored two days afterwards, having nearly got rid of all the cases of disease previously contracted there.

During the ten days that we have been absent from this place, two mechanics and two marines have fallen victims to fever; and of the remainder in the hospital, there are three with little hopes of recovery. These make the number of deaths, during the last three months, exceed a fourth part of the whole white population, which has never at any time exceeded sixty! and this fact alone damns all the proofs that ever were invented of the eminent salubrity of the festering atmosphere of this new English charnel-house, so admirably adapted for getting rid of our surplus population. Why send convicts to the finest climate in the world, or pamper them at home in hulks, at such an enormous expense, when they might be sent here for a mere trifle, and so easily disposed of? As our friend, the pink of Glasgow bailies, might be supposed to say, "they would just gae out o' the warld like the sough o' an auld sang, and gie' nane o' us ony mair trouble." A commutation of the punishment of death to transportation to Fernando Po, is worthy of some consideration, if it be intend-

ed to continue the establishment. The penalty, God knows, would be severe enough, and the ends of justice would be just as well served; and there is no want of work for some thousands of convicts to perform for the next twenty years, even if it were only to clear the ground. But first we must purchase the ground, for I understand that the Spanish government has only lent us the temporary occupation of two or three miles of it, as we will not purchase the whole island: and to continue even its present expense to the country, which amounts to at least £40,000 per annum, upon such an uncertain tenure, is the most egregious folly imaginable. Either have the whole island, or give it up entirely; for as sure as we enlarge and improve the settlement, (and we must do both before it can be of any use—before its ostensible object can be accomplished, namely, the location of the liberated Africans,) so surely will the Spanish government increase its price, and in the end make their own terms: so that, for what will now cost us only £150,000 or £200,000, a million may be demanded ten years hence. This is an instance of that injudicious economy, so curiously combined with the equally injudicious profusion, for which our government has, of late years, been so eminently distinguished. Forty thousand pounds a-year are thus expended upon Fernando Po, while dock-yard curtailments are daily going on, and the energies of the navy, upon which our country mainly rests her hopes of peace and safety, are cramped and paralyzed, in consequence of the insurmountable obstacles thrown in the way of that necessary stimulus, promotion, for the purpose of saving a few hundreds —both with the best of motives, no doubt, namely, relief from our own public burdens at home, as well as the alleviation of the miseries of the distressed African.

It has been unfortunate for the improvement of Africa, as well as for the advancement of the interests of our settlements there, that the persons appointed to official situations have very generally made mere jobs of them; and as soon as they have served their end, of pocketing a considerable sum of

money, or in some other way furthering their own private views, provided the climate spares their lives, they have scampered off, and left the settlement to the superintendence of other individuals, equally as ignorant and careless of its interests, and equally as solicitous of their own, as their predecessors. And this is one grand reason why I conceive that the natives, or permanent residents, such as the Maroons at Sierra Leone, should be appointed, as soon as it can be done, to fill official situations, in preference to the factitious and ephemeral whites.

The very elements seem to conspire against the formation of a settlement, in a situation so destructive to human life as Fernando Po, two transports, or freight ships, laden with stores and provisions for the establishment at Clarence Cove, having been totally lost on their passage out to it, during the last twelve months.

27th. The whites on shore continue to die daily. There are sixteen of those now remaining in the colony at present in the hospital, seven of whom are marines. Only one death has occurred to-day, and I think three of the remaining unfortunate men may, perhaps, survive for twelve hours longer; but all are in a precarious state.

8th December. We sailed to-day for Prince's and the Island of Ascension, glad to escape from the pestilent and destructive atmosphere of Clarence Town, as it is called, with the loss of only one man. We have escaped miraculously; which is only to be attributed to the great distance we were anchored off shore, perhaps out of the reach of the poisonous exhalations or miasmata — to the precautions taken to keep the ship clean, dry, and well ventilated — to hindering the seamen from going on shore, and thus preventing the occurrence of intoxication, and other irregularities — favourite sins of seamen — which are too often the forerunners, and always the predisposing causes, of fever, and other diseases, in these latitudes. But we have not escaped entirely scot free: sev-

eral pretty severe remittent and intermittent fevers have occurred on board. Eight or nine cases of cholera — not the scourge that is at present wasting continental Europe, Cholera Morbus, but a disease of a milder nature — and a great many catarrhs and sore throats have also appeared, originating in some atmospherical peculiarites imperceptible to the senses.

11th December. We anchored in the North West, of George's Bay, Fernando Po, this forenoon, for the purpose of getting a supply of yams from the natives, as our stock of bread is almost exhausted, and what remains is so full of insects, and so injured in other respects by the climate, that it is scarcely eatable. In consequence of the loss of the Norval freight ship, about two months ago, laden with provisions and stores for the settlement, there was no bread to be had when we left it, and very little provisions of any sort. They were depending solely upon the supply of yams and live stock received from the mainland by boats.

The character of the island around this bay, were it not for the exuberant vegetation, would be very similar to that of Ascension. It is only the frequent rains, and the difference in climate, which, by decomposing the ashes and lava originally on the surface of Fernando Po, and thereby affording shelter and nourishment for multitudes and vast varieties of the vegetable world, have made the aspect of their superfices so unlike each other. As at the island of Ascension, every little hill in this vicinity is an extinguished volcanic tumulus, and these are pretty numerous. I can count six or eight, besides the two principal mountains, on the north and south divisions of the island. The scenery here is uncommonly pleasing and has been said by some ardent admirers of African scenery, and proselytes to the doctrine of its never failing salubrity to resemble the Bay of Naples; but with less reason, I think, than any odious comparison I ever heard made. There does not appear to be the slightest resemblance, except in the volcanic mountains, of which instead of one, it has nearly a

dozen, and all of them extinguished. It makes one smile to see the magnificent Bay of Naples dragged forth on all occasions in comparison with objects so little worthy of it. We have Dublin Bay, which is said to resemble that of Naples, whereas it does so just about as much as the native *fruit* of the Green Isle resembles a racy pine apple; and the Frith of Forth, too, is unhappily and arrogantly put in competition with the varied magnificence of the Neapolitan Sinus; while every one who has seen both knows that the similitude is not more striking than that between a *barley bap* and a rich and highly ornamented twelfth cake.

George's Bay is of very considerable extent, and richly wooded, and much of the higher portions of ground exhibit every stage of cultivation; yet there is not a human habitation to be seen, although a pretty numerous population is visible in the volumes of smoke that issue from among the trees and bushes in every direction. Indeed, this is said to be the most populous part of the island. The north-east side of the bay is rather low, and a few trifling rivulets issue from this place, which, however, at a very short distance from the beach becomes diversified with hills. The head of the bay is high, and studded, as I have already said, with volcanic cones. The principal mountain on the south part of the island is rather steep, and its ascent is very rapid from the south-west side of this bay, which seems, in many respects, the most eligible situation for a settlement. Completely open to the sea breeze, which never blows sufficiently strong to endanger ships at anchor—an excellent anchorage, good water, a mountain close at hand many thousand feet high, the principal part of it cleared of wood, and for several miles cultivated, (the yam plantations shewing like the enclosures of a farm in England, with here and there a tree garnishing the green rectangular fields, separated by others recently turned up by the plough, or some implement that serves the same purpose,) where country-houses, or an hospital, might, with ease, be placed in any temperature short of freezing; plenty of disposable

ground for the location of the liberated Africans; besides the additional convenience to the mercantile shipping from the rivers Calabar, Bonny, Nun, and others in the Delta of Benin, which could touch here in their passage home, instead of running to leeward, as they are obliged to do, to the present settlement, for supplies before going to England, and by which means they are very often delayed a whole fortnight. They had been in the habit of touching here for supplies, such as water, wood, and yams, until lately that an intimation has been given to the masters of these vessels, by the present superintendent, that they will in future forfeit £100 if they do not call at the settlement for what they require. I imagine this must be done, "by authority," of course; but there was no little grumbling among the masters in consequence of it.

One of the most important considerations in the formation of a new settlement in these latitudes is the salubrity of the situation; for of what use is it to erect establishments, to build houses, and to people a spot where the besom of destruction sweeps it clean of all the European inhabitants, almost as fast as they come within range of the baneful influence of its atmosphere? If there be one situation on the island more unhealthy than another, it is that spot upon which the present settlement is placed. Low, and surrounded with stagnant pools, and sluggish muddy rivulets, and swampy fields of mangrove; every observant person must suspect its insalubrity at the first glance; and the events of the last four months have sufficiently proved that such a suspicion is correct. How is it that the natives have so few cultivated spots of ground on the lower parts of the island, and that the chief signs of the ax and the plough are on the mountain ridges, more than half a mile above the level of the sea? Such is the fact: and the only way to account for it is, that the natives have, by experience, discovered the insalubrity of the lower parts of the island. The present is what is commonly called the healthy season, and we left the people at Clarence Cove,

to use a vulgar, but in this instance, very applicable expression, "dying like rotten sheep." What must the mortality be during the *unhealthy* season, or during an epidemic, particularly if the white inhabitants were numerous, and not, as now, amounting to a mere handful?

The only objections which, I imagine, could have been urged against placing the settlement on the south-west part of this bay — which I conceive to be the most eligible, as it has the usual characteristics of a healthy situation, although it must, in this respect, but differ in degree from the present settlement—are the following:—

1st. The great number of aborigines in the vicinity.

2d. The increased distance of the spot from the rivers on the continent, where the slave trade is carried on.

3d. The surf on the beach from the sea breeze; and the openness of the anchorage.

To these the following answers may be given:

1st. The natives may be conciliated, as they have already been, with the greatest ease, and ground enough obtained for the location of liberated Africans, without infringing on what they occupy.

2d. Slave vessels issuing from or entering these rivers, are seldom or never seen from the present settlement, and the only intelligence received concerning them is derived from the colonial schooners, and merchant vessels arriving there. The increase of distance, which is barely thirty miles, is therefore a matter of very trifling consideration, as these vessels would still bring accounts of those engaged in the slave trade.

3d. The anchorage is what seamen call "excellent holding ground." The wind never blows a gale directly into the bay, which is completely sheltered from tornadoes, the only dan-

gerous winds on this part of the coast. The surf on the beach, from the moderate sea breeze, is generally trifling, and can never be so very great, but a small pier, run a few yards out into the sea, would completely annul the objection, were it ten times as great.

Great numbers of the natives came to the beach to sell their yams, but, as they would take nothing in exchange except axes, of which there was but a small number on board, we were only able to obtain a supply for three days, in consequence of which we must be put upon half the usual allowance of bread, bad as it is, or half the usual allowance of yams, which at best form but a poor substitute for the "staff of life." Here, some five or six years ago, the most valuable article of barter was old iron hoops, cut into pieces six or eight inches long. These constituted the current coin of the country, and were eagerly received in exchange for their produce, — yams and live stock: but commerce and "*the march*" go hand in hand, and now "*the Boo-bee*" is seen with a neat Birmingham blade and "bone-ivory" handle stuck between his left arm and its twisted belt of straw, and he treats a bit of the once valued iron hoop with as much sovereign contempt as the impudent menial of a second-rate hotel turns over, and and turns up his nose at, the few pence thrown to him, because they do not quite amount to half as much as the full value of the "half-pay" glass of brandy and water which it has just been his arduous office to place before you. This improved change of ideas has, no doubt, originated with the liberality of the Liverpool palm oil traders, who have hitherto been in the habit of touching here. The natives on this part of the island appear to be, in general, stronger and more lively than those I have seen near the settlement, which may arise, perhaps, from the air of the mountainous region in which they live. There is no difference in their costume: each carried a long barbed or crenated wooden spear, but, excepting a knife, none of them possessed any other weapon.

We reached Ascension on the 5th January, 1832, and after

taking on board a supply of provisions in excellent preserva tion — more desirable after the rottenness which the climat of Fernando Po had introduced among those we had recentl been using as food, and of which, bad as it was, we had reduced allowance — we proceeded towards Sierra Leone where we anchored on the 28th, and found there his Majesty' ship Isis, bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Warren, who ha arrived to take command of this and the Cape of Good Hop station, and who had consequently brought orders for us t proceed to England, — a piece of intelligence, as may be sup posed, not a little gratifying to us. By the Isis, we learn tha the French government have entered into a convention witl ours, for the purpose of granting the mutual right of searcl within certain limits of this coast, for the more effectual sup pression of the slave trade. As this treaty does not contem plate the capture of vessels fitted for the reception of slaves and as all slave vessels detained under the French flag are by this arrangement, to be sent to Goree for adjudication, such a treaty — in so far as the prevention or suppression of the slave trade is concerned — must be a complete nullity. It will, perhaps, obstruct it for a short time, until another conve nient flag can be found, under which to carry it on; or, if this be not the sole effect of the treaty, it will most certainly add to the cruelty with which the captive slave is at present treated on board French slave vessels — their hitherto com parative immunity from seizure inducing them to take on board a smaller number than those vessels more liable to capture, and consequently enabling them to attend better to cleanliness, as well as to provide more and better food and drink for their wretched inmates. The great distance of Goree from every part of the coast where the slave trade is carried on will likewise add greatly to the misery of the slave by the length of the passage after capture. Until the slave trade is ultimately denounced as piracy under the law of na tions, by the consent of the civilized world, its suppression must be but partial and incomplete. Were France and Eng-

land cordially to unite their exertions for this purpose, the desirable object is more than half accomplished.

1st February. The colony of Sierra Leone has been unusually healthy since we left it, and appears to have undergone some improvements, particularly in the direction of the Cape, where the country is more extensively cleared of the wood and jungle which covered it. Indeed this appears to be the case generally throughout the settlement, and will no doubt contribute very materially to its salubrity. The liberated Africans are seen labouring in the fields in every direction, and appear, as usual, remarkably contented and happy. From circumstances which have come under my notice, I am inclined to form a very favourable opinion of these poor people, who are so cruelly traduced by a certain class of interested and heartless men, who would endeavor to make us believe that the slave has not a soul to be saved, any more than the hog that wallows and festers in his own mire, and that he is about as stupid and insensible. That the intellectual capacity and the moral feeling of the liberated African black is in all respects equal to the civilized and educated individual with a skin of a different colour, and that his ignorance and dulness is merely the rough outside of the pebble, which a little polishing removes, and exhibits to view the brilliant gem within, I have, with much gratification, observed in numerous instances on board this ship.

It has been a custom with the liberated African department, for a long period, to send on board our ships of war a number of African lads recently emancipated, to be employed, as may be deemed fit, by the officer commanding. They receive no pay, are supplied with two-thirds of a rations daily, and are scantily clothed from the store of the department at Freetown. Eleven of these boys, received direct from this department, we have had on board for upwards of twelve months, and about fifteen of them for shorter periods, received from different ships on the station, which had taken them on board, like ourselves,

at Sierra Leone, but a short time before. The youngest of the first eleven who came on board appeared about fourteen, the eldest nineteen years old. They were recently manumitted, of course unable to utter a word of English, and being nearly all of different tribes, were also incapable of communing with each other—in fact, perfect specimens of young savages just escaped from the wild and desolated country which gave them birth. Soon after their arrival, they were put to different employments on board, and certainly no extraordinary degree of care was taken concerning their instruction; but for all this, two of them, who have assisted the rope-maker, have shewn themselves so very apt, that they can already manufacture as good rope as their master, who honestly acknowledges such to be the fact. Another was placed to assist the armourer, and is already a very passable blacksmith: a fourth with the carpenter, who assures us his progress is astonishing, and that he is already highly useful to him: and a fifth with the sail-maker, and his improvement is in a similar ratio. The rest have been placed to various other employments, their progression in which has been only equalled by their zeal and good humour, and by the willingness with which they set about their work. Of the others, who have been still a shorter time on board than these, six were received from his Majesty's ship Medina, before she sailed for England, who had been a considerable time on board of her, and had met with great kindness, and had received the most attentive instruction at the hands of her experienced commander. They had been taught a seaman's duty, and were *infinitely more* expert and active aloft, than the white boys of the ship; and, while with us, did their duty, in every respect, with so much zeal and alacrity, that their behaviour called forth the most unqualified praise. While at Ascension, one of these boys became affected with a disease of the brain and spinal marrow, which produced paralysis of the lower extremities, and eventually carried him off. The attention of the other boys to their poor

friend was most assiduous; and when the fatal event took place, they exhibited every mark of deep, unfeigned sorrow.

3d February. As it was necessary that we should communicate with our three tenders, Black Joke, Fair Rosamond, and Sea Flower, before finally leaving the station, we sailed again, this morning, to run once more along the coast, for that purpose. Touching at Cape Coast Castle, on the 14th, for information, and sailing again the same evening, we reached Accra next day, where we remained for a week, enjoying the liberal hospitality of Messrs. Bannerman and Hanson, two British merchants resident there, of whose attention to us we cannot too warmly express our acknowledgment. Nor are we the only persons who have experienced kindness at the hands of these intelligent and liberal minded men; but every officer who has visited the Gold Coast, speaks with equal warmth of the agreeable hours he was enabled to pass in their society.

21st. The natives of Accra are a shrewd, cunning, and ready witted people, and possessed, at the same time, of much of the simplicity of manners and lively disposition of those less familiar with Europeans on other parts of the coast.—They are often hired by the officers of our squadron as servants, for which purpose they are found to answer better than the natives of any other part of the coast. The arts have made considerable progress among them; and their houses, although formed chiefly of clay, and thatched, are, many of them, large, commodious, airy specimens of architecture, of one, two, or three floors; and the three or four houses occupied by English merchants, are built of stone, and are in themselves castles or palaces, although erected by natives, under the superintendence of the owner. Finger rings, and other gold ornaments, are also manufactured by them, in a style of peculiar neatness and elegance, with the rudest implements; and, without the slightest instruction, they will imitate, to a nicety, any article of this description that may be sent to them.

The annual vote by Parliament of £4000, for the repair of the forts on the Gold Coast, seems to have the effect of keeping them, at all events, well whitewashed; but, excepting in their imposing appearance, and the ignorance of the usual native assailants, they are little better than useless. Each of three towns, British, Dutch, and Danish Accra, I was given to understand, contains from two to three thousand inhabitants, the Dutch town being the smallest. The houses of the inhabitants are huddled together, close to the walls of the forts, all of which adjoin the sea beach. The country round Accra is one vast plain, about fourteen miles broad, and forty-five long, thickly studded with the immense habitations of the ants called *termites*, large peaked mounds, or rugged cones of clay, from six to twenty feet in height, giving the whole plain an appearance of one widely spreading Indian village. Trees are by no means abundant on this broad champaign, which is generally covered with prickly pear bushes, and thick low brushwood; but the cashew, tamarind, and some other trees, are here and there cultivated for their fruit.

It is seldom that boats belonging to ships at anchor in the roadstead can land at Accra, in consequence of the tremendous surf usually met with on the beach, completely exposed as it is to the heavy roll of the Atlantic. We very fortunately had fine weather, and comparatively smooth water, during almost the whole of our stay, and landed in the canoes, which are well adopted for passing a surf, dry shod. These clumsy looking vehicles are of great length, and are paddled by ten or twelve men, who keep time to a discordant tune, bellowed and screaked by all during their exertions, managing the unwieldy bark at the same time with the greatest dexterity. The passenger's seat is in a sort of box, fixed in the bow of the canoe, where a chair is usually placed for his accommodation. By *stowing* close, the largest of them will take on shore ten or twelve passengers in this way at a time. We visited King Ankra, the Accra chief, who drank undiluted gin with a thirst which I thought unquenchable, and after-

wards rode out to Danish Accra, (about three miles to the eastward of the two others, which are contiguous, in a gig, or calash, drawn—it will hardly be believed in a Christian country, but such is the practice here—by four stout blacks, who dragged us along at a rapid pace, and seemed, by their grinning, laughing, and chattering, to enjoy the run as much as we were amused with the novelty of the conveyance—in anticipation, doubtless, of a few cut-moneys they might receive, for there could be little real pleasure, one would think, in such a recreation, under so hot a sun; but such is the custom at Accra, and "when at Rome we must do as Rome does."

After having received on board between three and four hundred parrots, and other birds, beasts, and reptiles, for our friends in England, we took leave of the Gold Coast on the 22d February, and went in search of the Black Joke, which we supposed to be cruizing in our course, but found at Fernando Po on the 29th, having captured on the 15th, without resistance or any event worth mentioning, the Spanish schooner "Frasquita," of one hundred and fifteen tons, with two hundred and ninety slaves on board, from the river Bonny bound to Cuba. The day after capture, she departed for Sierre Leone, in charge of one of the mates of the tender, and five seamen.

To our great mortification we learnt that the Commander-in-chief, (who, having sailed from Sierre Leone, had also arrived here before us,) after a survey held on the Black Joke at sea, which declared her unfit for service, had been under the necessity of ordering her to be broken up, and that she was to proceed to Sierra Leone for that purpose; to which place we likewise have been ordered to return, for the purpose of perpetrating the destruction of this favourite vessel—the terror of slave dealers, and scourge of the oppressors of Africa—which has done more towards putting an end to the vile traffic in slaves than all the ships on the station put to-

gether; for, besides what she was enabled to seize, by her swift sailing, previous to our arrival on the coast, of the ten vessels made prizes during the present Commodore's stay, she alone has captured five! She is not a very old vessel, although the destructive rot of this vapid climate has made serious inroads on her constitution. which, with the late repairs she underwent at Fernando Po, we had hoped to have patched up sufficiently to make her last for the next two years, but her decay must have been more rapid than we looked for. Still it is to be regretted that she was not ordered to be so repaired as to endure while the traffic in slaves has an existence; for her very name serves as a check to it. Rotten as she is, many a slave dealer would give a greater price for her than she originally cost, were it only for the purpose of destroying almost the only object of dread in his illicit traffic. Her demolition will, therefore, be hailed as the happiest piece of intelligence that has been received at the Havana, and wherever else the slave trade is carried on, for many years. The Africans themselves are sensible of the boon she has conferred on so many of their countrymen; for those liberated at Fernando Po, particularly the women, petitioned the Commodore, in the most earnest manner, not to destroy her. When they learned that he had received orders for so doing, as he was taking final leave of the place they crowded round him, and hugged and embraced him, and entreated him not to injure "poor Black Joke;" and urged their suit with all their warmth of a greatful recollection of what their favourite had done for them and theirs. It will be remembered that several of these poor people found friends, and relation in the Marinerito when taken by the Black Joke in April last.

Two "cut-down" ten-gun brigs, the Brisk and Charybdis have recently been sent here from England, in the mistaken hope that they will answer extremely well for the suppression of the slave trade. They are no more to be compared, in point of sailing qualities, to the Black Joke, or to slave vessels generally, than they themselves were in their original state to

what they are now. The Black Joke has tried rate of sailing with them, and, to speak technically, she walks round and round them in a cable's length. It is therefore evident, that they will answer very little better than any of the rest of our clumsy ships of war, for the capture of the fast-sailing American built "clippers," engaged in the slave trade. The Black Joke was herself one of this description, taken by Commodore Sir Francis Collier, in the Sybille ; and it is only a similar description of vessel which can be under present circumstances, of any effectual service in the capture of these illicit traders, instead of the heavy frigates, sloops of war, and gun brigs, hitherto employed for that purpose. In no instance is the old proverb, "set a thief to catch a thief," more applicable, or better exemplified, than in the present. It is, therefore much to be regretted, that the tender cannot be taken to England, thoroughly repaired, or even renewed, and sent back to the coast: but destroyed she must be, and we selected for that purpose.

2d. March. Leaving Fernando Po to-day, (where, by the by, we found that Mr. Chapman, a colonial officer, and both sergeants of marines, and others, had fallen victims to the climate since we were here before,) we stood towards Prince's Island, took on board a supply of wood and water, bade adieu to the "Good Queen," and wended our way towards Ascension, where we arrived on the

26th; and learned, that the crew of our tender, "Fair Posamond," while here recently, had suffered severely from dysentery, in consequence of having been placed in quarantine at a small bay called Comfort Cove, a little to the northward of the anchorage, because part of the crew were labouring under smallpox, caught from the diseased inmates of the two slave vessels lately detained in the river Bonny, and which the medical officers of the island were reasonably afraid might be introduced among the inhabitants, many of the youngest of whom had not undergone the usual preventative ordeal.

The tender, while here, was "hove down," for the purpose of being coppered; during which operation the crew were landed at the Cove, where tents were erected for their reception. During the day, they worked on board the vessel, and landed to meals and to sleep. The air in the Cove, completely sheltered as it is from the breeze, was uncommonly dry and rarified; and the thermometer stood sometimes as high as one hundred degrees in the shade, while on board the tender, where the south-east trade wind blew with uncommon freshness, it never exceeded eighty-two. As the vessel was barely three quarters of a mile from the shore, the dysentery, I think, may be attributed principally to this great difference of temperature, and to the frequent and sudden vicissitudes daily taking place during their visits to and from the vessel. Some were inclined to consider the water of the island, (which being principally obtained from the scanty showers that occasionally fall, and kept in tanks, is none of the best,) as the sole cause of the disease; but I am fully convinced, that this water has no really deleterious property, and could not, without more powerful concomitants—such as vicissitudes of temperature, an unusually dry atmosphere, and, as in the instance of the tender's crew, a sudden change of diet, from a scanty allowance of salt provisions, to an abundant supply of fish, turtle, and vegetables,—produce so much violent disturbance in the alimentary canal. Twenty-five of the tender's crew, of forty-five men, were seized with the disease; but, although many of the cases assumed a most serious complexion, yet all recovered under the judicious care of Mr. Macleroy, the assistant surgeon in charge.

Sierra Leone, 29th April. On our arrival here to-day, we found that our last prize, the Frasquita, had made a passage from the place of capture to this colony in three weeks; but that, although it occupied so brief a space of time, the poor slaves had suffered in a frightful manner, from the ravages of small pox and dysentery, fifty of them, during that short period, hav-

ing fallen victims to these diseases, and ten soon after their arrival at the colony!

We found here also the Spanish brig Segunda Teresa, captured by his Majesty's brig Pelorus, on the 19th March, off Cape St. Paul's, with four hundred and sixty slaves on board, bound from Whydah to Havana. Her passsage to this place also occupied three weeks, during which only ten of the slaves died. It has been universally remarked, that the slaves sent from the river Bonny are much more debilitated, unhealthy, and subject to disease, than those from the other parts of the coast; but I have never heard any reason assigned for so melancholy a fact, which, however, will serve to account for the great difference of mortality on board the two vessels.

After the mortifying operation of destroying the Black Joke which was done by fire, we sailed, on the 9th of May, for the river Gambia, on a requisition from the Governor of Sierra Leone, that we should afford convoy to a small schooner, hired for the purpose of carrying a number of Africans, recently emancipated from the two vessels just mentioned, to our settlement there, for the purpose of location. We arrived, with her in company, on the 29th. There were upwards of one hundred and thirty of these poor wretches put on board the vessel, and nothing could exceed their miserable plight, or the distressing state in which I found them, on paying a visit to the sick during the passage up. No slave vessel that I have ever seen or heard of, with her unhappy inmates just kidnapped and sent on board from any of the numerous slave marts on this extensive coast, for the purposes of expatriation, could possibly be in a more filthy state, or her miserable captives in a more wretched and pitiable condition. Dysentery and ophthalmia were making heavy inroads among them, from the filth and crowding, and the distressing effects of their accumulated and long-continued miseries. The dysenteric patients were lying on the bare deck, some of them "*in articulo mortis*,"

without a covering; for, not a bed or a sheet was in the vessel for their use, and seven of them died on the passage. This may be understood to be emancipation, but, at all events, such an exemplification of it does not afford its objects any very speedy relief from their distresses.

30th May. The island of St. Mary's, upon which the town of Bathurst is situated, on the south bank of the entrance to the river Gambia, is a complete flat, and consists almost wholly of loose sand, into which you plunge almost to the ancles at every step, with, as may be supposed in such a soil, hardly any vegetation; but beyond St. Mary's, the country, which is extremely low on both sides of the river, appears to be in the highest degree rich and luxuriant. On Barra Point, the jutting bank of the river directly opposite to Bathurst Town—the scene of the late squabble with the natives, in which our sailors and troops behaved, as usual, so well, and during which not a few valuable lives were lost, for no very satisfactory reason that I have heard of—they are at present erecting a fort for the better security of the ceded territory. The river here is two miles and three quarters broad; its stream very rapid, and of a muddy clay colour.

The town of Bathurst has a lively pleasant appearance.—The houses of the Europeans are very airy, and of rather tasteful construction, and, (whether for the sake of effect on the natives, preservation of the material, or coolness, does not appear,) are, like all other buildings of Europeans on the coast, daubed with a plentiful coat of whitewash. The liberated African and native houses in the town are generally circular, and formed of wicker work, with circular roofs, thatched and peaked, so that they closely resemble bee-hives on a large scale. They are enclosed in numbers together, within a hedge eight or ten feet high, of the same basket-work material of which their walls are composed. During our stay here, the average height of the thermometer was much below

what we had ever found it on any other part of the coast, the minimum being 71.00, maximum 76.00, with hazy weather, and a very heavy night dew. This change of temperature was indescribably grateful to our feelings.

31st May, 1832. To-day, after a shorter stay than was anticipated, we took our final departure from the coast of Africa for England, and after touching again at St. Jago, and at St. Michael's, arrived at Spithead on the 29th July, 1832, having, out of a complement of three hundred men, lost only ten by disease, including those who died on board our tenders, during a stay of twenty months in that unhealthy region.

List of Vessels engaged in the Slave Trade, captured by the

Name of the vessel.	Date of capture.	Under what colours.	Where captured.	From what part.	where bound
Jules	Jan. 6	Netherland	Bar of River Calabar	Old Calabar	St. Thomas
La Jenne Eugenie	Do.	Do.	Do.	Do.	Martinique
Bella Eliza	Jan. 7	Brazilian	3° 13′ N. 4° 41′ E.	Lagos River	Bahia
Vingador	Jan. 15	Portuguese	12° 17′ N. 16° 54′ W.	Town of Cachee off the River Cacheo	Brazil
Aurelia	15	Do.	12° 17′ N. 16° 54′ W.	Do.	St. Jago
El Almirante	Feb. 1	Spanish	3° 50′ N. 4° 25′ E.	Lagos River	Havana
Uniao	6	Brazilian	2° 48′ N. 5° 12′ E.	Do.	Bahia
Adeline	9	Netherland	Fernando Po.	St. Thomas	Brasse
Mensageira	15	Brazilian	Bar of the R. Bonny	River Bonny	Rio de Janerio
Andorinha	19	Do.	At Lagos	Lagos River	Bahia
Donna Barbara	21	Do.	3° 2′ N. 4° 26′ E.	Do.	Havana
Hirondelle	26	Netherland	Entrance of R. Calabar	Akassa-tor River	St. Eustatius
Carolina	March 6	Brazilian	5° 11′ N. 4° 53′ E.	Lagos River	Bahia
Hosse	23	Portuguese	6° N. 2° 35′ E.	Whydah	Do.
Panchita	April 29	Spanish	5° 58′ N. 5° 02′ E.	New Ca. labar R.	Havana
Ceres	Aug. 6	Brazilian	1° 30′ N. 9° 16′ E.	R. Camerroons	Rio de Janerio
Emelia	16	Do.	5° 05′ N. 5° 15′ E.	River Lagos	Bahia
Claneta	17	Spanish	0° 25′ 5″ N. 8° 54′ 9″ E.	River Bonny	Havana
Christina	October	Do.	1° 28′ N. 6° 7′ E	River Brasse	Do.
Temtadora	Nov. 4	Brazilian	5° 17′ N. 4° 19′ E.	River Lagos	Bahia
Amelia	Dec. 9	Do.	5° 35′ N. 4° 19′ E.	Whydah	Do

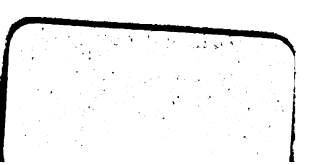
British Squadron employed on the western coast of Africa, 1829.

How rigged.	Number of slaves when captured.	Length of passage to S. Leone	No. of deaths on the passage.	By what vessel taken.	Remarks.
		Days.			
Brig	220	27	13	Boats of H. M. S. Eden	144 men, 76 women, emancipated.
Schooner	50	31	4	Cornelia tender to Eden	18 men, 32 women emancipated.
Do.	239			Medina	Vessel 120 tons burden; 75 men, 22 women, 118 children emancipated.
Brig	223	6	2	Primrose	115 men, 51 women, 54 children emancipated.
Galliot	38	6	None	Do.	13 men, 6 women, 19 children emancipated.
Brig	466	34	39	Black Joke	Vessel 350 tons burden. 11 killed or missing in the gallant action. The 39 deaths include all who died previous to adjudication; 276 men, 77 women 132 children eman
Brigantine	405	22	33	Sybille	93 men, 153 women, 120 children emancipated.
Schooner	Cargo of goods			Eden	
Do.	353		43	Cornelia	244 emancipated. Besides the deaths on the passage 66 died after arrival at Sierra Leone.
Brig	Cargo of goods	23		Sybille	
Schooner	357	21	21	Andorinha	86 men, 129 women, 126 children emancipated.
Do.	112		5	Eden	18 died after arrival at S. Leone; 89 emancipat.
Brigantine	430	21	18	Black Joke	3 deaths after arrival; 64 men, 186 women, 149 children emancipated.
Do.	188	44	16	Sybille	Vessel 250 tons; 166 emancipated.
Schooner	292	19	10	Do.	Vessel 170 tons; 435 emancipated; 23 deaths after arrival.
Do.	279	34	100	Plumper	50 deaths after arrival; 128 emancipated.
Do.	488	27	51	Dallas tender to Sybille	Vessel 150 tons; 259 emancipated; 2 deaths after arrival.
Do.	261	23	35	Medina	201 emancipated.
Brigantine	348			Black Joke	
Schooner	431			Dallas	
Brigantine	187			Sybille & Atholl	Vessel 175 tons

List of vessels engaged in the Slave Trade, captured by the periods of his Majesty's Ship Dryad's arrival

Name of the vessel.	Date of capture.	Under what colours.	Where captured.	From what part	Where bound.
Dos Amigos	1830 Nov. 8	Spanish	Off Cameroons	R. Cameroons	Havana
Nympha	Nov. 24	Spanish	Off Rio Pongos	Rio Pongos	Boa Vista
Maria	Dec. 25	Spanish	Off R. Gallinas	River Gallinas	Havana
Primeira	1831 Feb. 22	Do.	Off Cape Mount	Do.	Do.
El Marinerito	April 26	Do.	Off S. E. point of Fernando Po	Old Calabar	Do.
Potosi	July 20	Do.	4° 53′ N 4° 26′ E	Lagos	Do.
Regalo	Sept. 10	Do.	In the R. Bonny	River Bonny	Cuba
Rapido	Do.	Do.	Do.	Do.	Do.
Frasquita	1832. Feb. 15	Do.	3° 30′ N 7° 28′ E	Do.	Do.
Segunda Teresa	March 19	Do.	Off Cape St. Pauls	Whydah	Havana

British Squadron on the Western Coast of Africa, between the on and departure from that station.

How rigged.	No. of slaves when captur'd	Length of passage to S. Leone	No. of deaths on the passage	By what vessel taken.	Remarks.
		Days.			
Brigantine		27		Black Joke	Had 450 slaves on board; but running up the river Cameroons, was enabled to land them before capture.
Schooner	169	4		boats of the Conflict	Taken after a smart fight in which some of the Spaniards were killed, & several of the Conflict's crew, as well as of the slaves, wounded.
Brigantine	504	6		Plumper	
Scho'ner of 130 tons	311	8	1	Black Joke tender to Dryad	111 men, 45 women, 96 boys, 53 girls, 4 infants; 3 killed by shot from the Tender: height of slave deck 2 feet 2 inches.
Brig of 303 ts.	496	24	22	Do.	Several slaves accidentally killed in the action; 26 died soon after from fright; 107 landed at Fernando Po sick from terror crowding & privations; 60 of whom died in a few weeks, either there or on their passage to S. Leone
Schooner	191	23	7	Fair Rosamond, tender to Dryad	2 deaths after arrival.
Brig 175 tons Spanish admeasurment	294	27		Fair Rosamond and Black Joke	24 died on passage, 10 missing.
Brig 147 tons Spanish	2	27			A vast number of slaves thrown overboard during the chase; 150 of whom were drowned.
Scho'ner 115 tons	290	21	50	Black Joke	The deaths arose from small pox & dysentery; 10 more died after arrival.
Brig 174 tons	460	21	10	Pelorus	The deaths arose from small pox and dysentery.

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